AN OPEN LETTER.

Choose you this day whom ye will serve.- Josh 24:15

TO THE BELOVED OF GOD:- Grace to you and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Hearken, O Daughter; and consider, and incline thine ear. Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house (earthly); so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty" (of character).

"Do you suppose that the Scripture speaks falsely? The friendship of the world (including worldly governments) is enmity against God; therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world (worldly institutions) is rendered an enemy of God. Be you subject therefore to God (not to man) and purify your hearts, men of two souls." -(Jas.4:4,5, 7,8 -Diag.) Positive decision is necessary to assure victory. (D66,67;A214.-Manna Aug.6)

Therefore, "Send out Thy Light and Truth, O Lord. Let these our Leaders be, to guide us to Thy Holy Hill, where we shall worship Thee". No, dear brethren in Christ, the Scriptures do not speak in vain, but instead for our comfort and consolation; "Indeed they bestow superior favor." Verily does "God set himself in opposition to the haughty". There is one Law-Giver and Judge. He is both able to save and to destroy. "He therefore who knows to do right, and does not perform it, to him it is sin". (Jas.4-Diag.) Therefore we must actively and openly oppose wrong wherever recognized in order to safeguard others from its influence. - Pastor Russell.

In view of widely existing conditions, the Church's needs, and the Light of present day revealments, we can think of no more vital message to send to the Saints of God, those who would stand steadfast, than this. TAKE UP AND READ CAREFULLY AND PRAYERFULLY THE ENTIRE SET OF SEVEN VOLUMES OF STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, and as you do so, note the great flood of light beaming from their pages throughout. For a long time we have been looking FOR certain things; now we are looking AT them. These things are HERE.

"We are desiring the Kingdom, for which our Lord taught us to pray and even the world, if it would but realize the true character of this Kingdom, would HAIL IT AT ONCE as the boon for all human ills. Those who oppose its establishment are not in harmony with the Golden Rule. Such hold to present arrangements with a death-like clutch". (C19;C65) Truly this is a solemn thought, "Blessed are the homesick, for they shall go home! Blessed are they who prefer to remain here, for their desires shall be granted." Sad though it is, seemingly many of the Lord's children are in that condition which the Apostle terms "willingly ignorant of many things they should know. We cannot of course hope to reach such; but the honest-hearted, sincere-minded, we would if possible stir up to the intent that they might "recollect the words previously spoken" by our Lord, the Apostles and "That wise and faithful Servant". (F300-8 lines from top) There be "scoffers" not a few even amongst the consecrated in these last days, denying as they do, the evidences of their own senses; hence these let escape them that which would require no proof to establish (C237) Brother Paul says we are not"in darkness", or should not be, respecting the times in which we are living, though the fact remains that many are. (C139;1 Thess.5:4)

We recall in this connection our Lord's own words to the effect that His sheep hear His Voice, know his voice, and that they follow him; but from a strange voice they flee.(Jo.10:4,5) His sheep can *not be deceived*. Again, if anyone speaks differently it is because they are lacking in light. (Isa.8:20). We remember also that the Scripture declare that everything that is shakeable will be shaken. (Heb.12:26, 27) The "shaking" thus referred to is now going on and is so easily discernible everywhere, even in the Church of God, which he bought with the blood of his own Son, that it calls for no proof.(Z'02-234; Matt.12:41) Not only are the jewels now being assembled, as "special treasures", but these are being set in the "Diadem of Beauty", in the hand of the Lord. (Isa.28:5;62:3;F199;201) Truly these are blessed forevermore.

Let us now see to what intent we have been in the school of Christ studying God's wonderful plan, many of us for years, and how much of the true Spirit thereof we have imbibed. On one point of course we are all in the fullest accord, that, "The Gentile Times" began in 606 B.C. and ended in 1914 A.D., since which time (1914) there has been going on the worst conflict ever known, but the *true purpose* thereof seems to be lost upon many of God's children, consecrated to do His will, though he has told us this so plainly that the wayfaring man should not err. (Ezek.11:19;36:26,27 and "comments") God sees the necessity of giving men experiences to make them tender-hearted, sympathetic in spirit, preparatory to making them God-like in character. (B251;C90;D627).

As Bible Students, we see that God gave to the Gentile Kingdoms the right to rule over the earth for 2520 years. And "there is no power, but of God". This long lease expired in 1914 (D624), since which time he has been in the process of dispossessing them, as they would not yield without a struggle; so from the divine standpoint, they are *no longer* "the powers that be". The Lord is no longer recognizing what they so tenaciously hold to as their "God given rights". And since these Governments refuse to "get out", to surrender positions which they no longer hold rightfully, God is using *power* to"put them out", preparatory to setting up his Kingdom, for which we have long prayed, "Thy Kingdom Come!" (Dan.2:44;A262;B96; B99;D624).

Throughout the Scriptures there is a"day" referred to in various terms, as the "day of vengeance", the "day of God's wrath", the "day of darkness and gloominess", wherein we are told the "elements shall melt with fervent heat", etc. Long have we been looking for this day, and since it has arrived, many refuse or fail to recognize it; but persist in thinking that there are many years of work to be done by the Elijah class. We think this mistaken idea is responsible for much of the confusion existing in the Church to-day; as a result thereof, many are being lulled to sleep. (C230-232;G334,418,177,179,143,119, 64,123-4,127,128;C225) Read *understandingly* what "That wise and faithful Servant" has said. Unwittingly therefore, do many *oppose* God, probably in "all good conscience", by trying to keep the "door open", prolong the work, when all evidences indicate that the harvest is ended, as pointed out in the 7th Vol; therefore the "door must be closed". In "all good conscience" too, did Saul of Tarsus oppose himself, even as he confessed. To be "conscientious" is not sufficient - the conscience must be instructed; and such is the purpose of the Scriptures. (Heb.5:11-13;2 Tim.3:16;Isa.8:20) God tells us for our information that, as He purposes so shall it come to pass (Isa.14:24) and among other things he reveals to us being that, "he hath a Controversy with the Nations". (Jer.25:31;Hosea 4:1;Micah 6:2;Isa.3:13; Joel 2:1-4;3:2;8:12;D20,527-531).

Therefore, "Woe unto them which would justify the wicked for reward (for gain) and take away the righteousness of the righteous". (Isa.5:20-23) "The Devil makes a most desperate resistance to the new order of things. He will take advantage of every little circumstance, and all the inherited weaknesses of the human family, to enlist their hearts and hands and pens in this final struggle. Prejudices will be enkindled where, if the Truth were clearly seen, none would exist. This will be so, not because God has not made the Truth clear enough to guide all the fully consecrated, but because those who will be deceived were not sufficiently in earnest in seeking out and using the Truth provided". (D359) "Satan achieves no greater triumph than when he seduces a soul which was once enlightened and sanctified by the Truth". (F294) His object is to deceive the very elect. His methods therefore are most subtle. He uses methods and channels little thought of. We should not be ignorant of his devices. See "comments" Matt.24:24 and references given.

The Church's mission is not to help the world to improve its present condition, nor to have anything to do with its affairs at present. To attempt to do so would be but a waste of effort for the world's course is fully under the control of Him who in His own time will give us the Kingdom. Knowing that the purpose of God is to let the world fully test its own ability to govern itself, the true Church should not, while in it, be of the world. The Saints may influence the world only by their separateness from it, by letting their light shine; and thus through their lives the spirit of Truth reproves the world. The Church of God should give its entire attention and effort to preaching the Kingdom of God, and to the advancement of the interest of that Kingdom according to the plan laid down in the Scriptures. The Lord had no time for other matters; neither had the apostles; neither have any of the Saints who follow their example". (A267)

Now, therefore, since God has a "Controversy with the Nations", it is manifestly no part of the proper course of a true Christian to have any share whatever in such Controversy; and especially so, in direct opposition to His Holy Word and His clearly revealed purpose. (Zech.3:8;Psa.2:9,10) "God's wisdom has marked out our path, which he has devised for such good as He will accomplish in His own time and manner". (C90) This "path shines more and more unto the perfect day", but only as we walk therein. (B22,23)

"The end of all things is at hand", which includes of course all present institutions. "The end" referred to by the Apostle is inevitable, because fixed by Jehovah (Z'03-365) Why then, should any enlightened Christian even attempt, in the slightest way to stay the Divinely appointed result or prolong the agony leading up to the foretold and long promised blessings for mankind? (A254) Surely such are not properly instructed in the spirit of the Lord's Word. No;

are to have no part whatever with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather we are to reprove them. (Eph.5:11;Joel 2:1;A267;D19;C196 - 10th line from top) (D540) We cannot be the friend of Caesar and the friend of Jesus at the same time. So do not attempt therefore the impossible. "To die as a result of refusing to give our influence to war in any manner, is one way by which God's people can become martyrs".(Z'15-259-51;Ques Book 677) Again Pastor Russell said, "God's people can have no interest in war" and are not to take human life even in self-defense". (Z-1916) Remember his further declaration, "God holds men responsible, not only for what they know, but for what they might know if they would apply their hearts unto instruction". (D49;Prov.22:17-22;23:12;2 Tim 2:15)

For obvious reasons we cannot go into detailed analyses of single texts of Scriptures, though a few we would consider briefly in our treatment of this vital matter. See then Psa.110:5,6. We note that in this "Controversy" which God has "with the Nations" He purposes to "strike through Kings"; that these are to be His agencies in "the day of His wrath" to accomplish His ends; that through these He wills to "fill the places (trenches) with dead bodies"; and as a result to "judge among the heathen" (so-called Christendom) and "wound the heads over many countries" - civil, social and ecclesiastical. (Z'02-285;B101) Note that He will do the"Judging". (D19,20,27,52,53, 143,186)

Therefore it is not for His children to intervene in any sense whatever in this "Controversy", and attempt conscientiously or otherwise, to stay the hand (power) of the "righteous judgment of God". "HANDS OFF" should be the guiding rule of action with every true Disciple of Christ in this world conflict. We are not qualified as "judges" yet, so we cannot say that this or that nation is more righteous than another. (Acts 17:25) We know rather that they are all unrighteous, for the Bible declares that, "all the gods of the nations are idols"; and that "he shall judge among the nations", for "the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations". "I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth"; and "ye (every nation) shall certainly drink". (C174;Isa.34:1-8;Isa.60:12;Jer.25:29-32; A261;Psa.149:8,9;D19)

"Believers have perfect confidence in Christ's ability to carry out all of Jehovah's great projects in respect to our race; therefore these rest from any desire or attempt to secure the result by any other means". (A267,268;F48) There is no middle ground on this question, and the sooner God's people decide positively in accord with His Word, the better it will be for them. Let God be true, though it prove every theorist a liar. Unfortunately, however, it has become customary with many fully consecrated Christians, as well as with others, to read the words of Divine inspiration in a mazy, hazy manner, which fails to give to its utterances their real import, and deprives the reader of much of the blessing which might be his, if he but pursued a more reasonable course and were more thoroughly filled with the spirit of true discipleship". (F59;A255-257)

With this thought in mind, then please examine critically Dan.2:44;A262;B69;D624;Zeph 3:8;A317;B162;D13,21,46,272;Hab.2:2;C89; Jer.46:28;Isa.18:1;Z'04-230-231;Isa.13:4,9,13-19;B147;B149;A523;C229; Isa.24:1-6;D529-531,551,558) "Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass". Isa.14:24,26,27. Now, then, if any Disciple of Christ is ignorant of the true meaning of these and other references he is, according to Brother Russell, "without excuse", RESPONSIBLE BEFORE GOD for he has had the opportunity of Knowing the facts. John 5:39; I Tim.2:15

"But" says one, "I would not think of aiding in an iniquitous war by taking up an gun and going into the trenches, for I believe it would be wrong to take human life; though under pressure I believe I could accept non-combatant service". This very thot was brought out at the trial of our dear Brethren in Brooklyn; the presiding Judge saying in criticism, "Then Mr. Witness you would do indirectly what you say would be wrong for you to do directly". It seems strange indeed that one possessing the "Spirit of a sound mind" cannot reason as logically on Scriptural matters as one of the "Court of Caesar".

A gun is an instrument of destruction; and the trigger thereof is a very harmless looking bit of steel, yet the gun would also be harmless without the trigger. Hence if no one supplied the "trigger" (the munitions of warfare, non-combatant service, etc.) in any country on earth, of necessity war would be an impossibility. So everything connected with this awful war, is in some manner a part of the great war machine; and it matters not whether it be either directly or indirectly so. Besides, this is a Gentile war- not a Christian one; for the Christian is warned that his warfare is not against flesh and blood in any sense; neither are his weapons of a carnal character. "We cannot even give to a wrong principle the weight of our influence", says Brother Russell, "without being partakers of the sin". Again he says, "It is impossible to have the Spirit of Christ and still have fellowship with the opponents of Christ". Therefore the Apostle enjoins, "Be ye separate, and touch not the unclean things". (2 Cor.6:17;Isa.52:11;Z 1893-308;A267;F581) "Those who have the eyes of their understanding enlightened do not stumble; but as they climb higher upon the Rock they see much more clearly both the past and the future of the Divine Plan". (B241) Let not Satan beguile you by his plausible sophestries.

Still, another, thinking himself more enlightened, with broader views, less "perverted" than some, and quite "conscientious", openly declares, he could not go into the trenches, neither share in the non-combatant service, yet feels it to be incumbent upon him to do what one with a "perverted view" could not do without a violation of conscience, namely, "loan" the Lord's money to a Gentile Government, under which he may chance to be living, apparently overlooking the vital point that, these very dollars so "loaned" may be used later to prosecute if not to persecute himself or others of the Lord's brethren; and perhaps unjustly throw them into jail. Furthermore, such seem forgetful of the clearly marked Scriptural fact that, their "citizenship is in heaven", and to this heavenly country they have sworn allegiance; so while tabernacling here they are but strangers and pilgrims. Though these are still in the world, they are not of the world. They "tarry here but for a night", as Ambassadors for Christ's Kingdom, which will soon supplant all the Gentile Kingdoms - "Thy Kingdom Come!" (A267;283)

Having therefore transferred their allegiance to another, a higher Government - Christ's - they must henceforth obey the law of the same, even when it conflicts with their temporal interests. Voluntarily have the consecrated Christians placed themselves under the "Law of the New Creation", and are henceforth bound by this, even unto death. (F367) They cannot change its terms, alter its requirements, or escape its penalties by attempting to shirk them. Do you know of a single instance wherein one has benefitted by a *compromising course*? I know of many instances where such steps have led to absolute failures to accomplish the end desired, to say nothing of the probable Divine displeasure incurred by lack of decision. *COMPROMISE SPELLS DEFEAT!* What Saint of God would hazard his Crown for present earthly gain?

It does not necessarily follow that because one "in all good conscience" has bought a War Bond or War Stamps or contributed to the hospital department of the war, that by such act *alone* he would forfeit his hold on the crown, though we believe this would be a long step towards such loss. Surely he has taken a dangerous course! For ourselves we know it would mean nothing less than our being a "castaway" as we *know better*. (Jas.4:17) Neither can it be justly argued that because one has done such things "in all good conscience" that the Lord would be pleased on that account; but we do believe that if there is godly sorrow, leading to sincere repentence, for *any mistake of judgment*, the Lord, being faithful, just and merciful, would forgive the offense. (1 Jo 1:9) We do not know how much *light* one must have before God would admit him into the Kingdom, but the Scriptures show that it is most dangerous for one to lose any measure of light once possessed. And no one with *clear light* will violate his conscience, neither will he act contrary to the Scriptures; though this would the Devil have us do. Jehovah admonishes, "Come now, let us reason together", so say we also. Does it not stand to *reason* that we cannot serve acceptably two nations whose *principles* and interests are not in juxtaposition. More especially would this fact stand out when it is remembered that we have sworn allegiance to the one and are but aliens in the other. Neither can we change *principles* merely by changing *views*. A thing that was wrong to do in 1916, 1917, cannot be right to do in 1918. There are others than the Pope who apparently think "to change times and laws", though in a different way.

A "principle" is defined as "A settled rule of action; a power that acts continuously and uniformly". *Views* of principles may change but that fact does not change the *principles*. There was but little diversity of opinion among the Truth people re the principle of warfare previous to the United States entering the world conflict, and persecution became the order of the day. Now by reason of this persecution many are fleeing to the government, "seeking the rulers' favor", so are hiding their "Light under a bushel" of *fear*. Through *fear* some seem disposed to make friends with the god of Mammon; whereas, *"perfect love casteth out all fear"*. (B237) We see not Jesus struggling to preserve his human life, by endeavoring to win favor with the powers of his day. (Prov.29:25,26) Then why should we? He called us to follow Him! By some it is asserted that if Jesus were here in the flesh again, He would be at the head of the allied armies in the trenches of France. *What a BLASPHEMY!* Obnoxious too is the thought we have heard expressed that, if Brother Russell were here today he would hold modified views. "Let no one defraud you of your prize."

Still again there are those whose consciences are so tender, "Quick as the apple of the eye", who could not have any part in the shedding of blood, doing what God has forbidden; nevertheless these find reasons, satisfactory to themselves, why they should assist in binding up the wounded, co-operating indirectly with man's schemes for attaining the desired end, though in opposition to God's. "To maintain their standing against organized opposition becomes a severe test of courage, which only a few are able to endure; the majority endeavor to make themselves respectable in the eyes of the world". (C120) Some of our dear Brethren at Brooklyn were convicted under the "Espionage Act" of giving aid and comfort to the enemy (Germany). And who furnished the money to prosecute this persecution? What shall we then say of those children of God who, either directly or indirectly, "give aid and comfort" to the enemies of God - (the God of this world) - Satan and his allies? The fact that they may do this unconsciously or even conscientiously, is not a solid basis for action. How many of the Lord's children do you suppose stop to consider that the money they have "loaned", rather "given" to the Government is used to persecute their own Brethren? (1 Cor.4:2) Every one will be required to give an account of this stewardship. Some say it is "all-right to do these things, but we need not tell others". How blind! (Matt.10:26) The great Judge sees and will judge deeds done under cover. (2 Chron.19:2;Z 1898-292;Psa.1:1;F293)

There be those who are more "sympathetic" than God - or seemingly would appear so. Some go so far as to intimate that they are "more just than God". (Job 4:17) We have heard some, who are over "sympathetic", express the thought that God should give Satan another or further opportunity. Thus do they become "judges of the Law" instead of doers thereof. The children of the Lord must not indulge in subterfuges. Through leaning to their own natural human sympathy many ignorantly "fight against God" - their "sympathies" being directed in the wrong channel. How easily some of the priestly class forget the lesson given through Aaron and his two sons, who were forbidden to mourn for the two who violated their covenant and were destroyed. (Lev.10:6;T41) Therefore through maudlin sympathy some would ignorantly prolong the "Controversy" which God has with the "Nations", and which they so much deplore, by assisting in ever so small manner to extend the strife, attempting to put a "new patch" on the "rotten rag" of human theories. There are things which the world may consistently do, indeed there are some things it would be most inconsistent from their standpoint for them to not do, namely, to not use carnal weapons in defensive warfare. But the Christian is to be separate from the World and the spirit thereof. (2 Cor.6:17) "Come, give me your hand", said the merry old world. "Nay", says the true Church:-

"I will not give you my hand at all,
And I will not walk with you;
Your way is the way that leads to death;
To my Lord I must be true".

We should guard against every indication of sympathy or affiliation with the spirit of the world. It is not for us to attempt to transform the world and revolutionize society and its methods. We are not in sympathy with any of the present institutions, which are based upon selfishness, and in opposition to the Divine Law, the Golden Rule". (F606-7)

What a blessing it would be for all true friends of righteousness, those who "to the Lord would be true", if they would but remember that they are not only honorary but must be active, members of the most wonderful of all societies, the one that has for its object the

Emancipation of Mankind, the amelioration of every social and moral evil, the antidote for all human ailments - "The Society of the Blood-Stained-Cross", which is "red" enough for anybody. (D242) The Head and Founder of this Society is the Great Prince of Peace and he stained its Emblem - THE CROSS - with His own precious blood. We are called to be like him, and must follow His instructions, His teachings, obey His commandments. (Jo 12:23;15:14) Anyone therefore who would attempt to improve upon the Divine arrangement, by substituting something for the "Blood-Stained-Cross", becomes to that extent a "judge of the law" of God. "The laws given by God permit of no amendment". (A46) "And God's children should discern His purposes, which are definitely fixed, then act in harmony with them". (A25; 65 also 69) "We obtain correct ideas of the whole plan by noting the distinctive features of each part". (A74) "God holds us responsible, not only for what we know, but for what we should know". Pastor Russell.

We have professed acceptance of Brother Russell as "That Servant", and the Seven Volumes as authentic, therefore guides to our actions. Now we are being tested to see to what extent our professions have a foundation, in fact are true, not vain pretenses. All through his writings there run certain well-defined principles, which "He that runs may read". These principles are but the illuminations, lights from God's Word, though there be some who think the views expressed by him are "perverted". (C137) We do not share these opinions of course. Principles are ever and always essentials; never and at no time are they NON-ESSENTIALS. It has been noted by all, and frequently commented upon, that no where does Brother Russell inveigh against the use of tobacco; yet all who were once users of the filthy weed quickly gave it up after reading the volumes. Why? Because he ever "Laid the axe at the root of the tree". Hence he made principles plain; so that those whose "eyes of understanding" are opened widely enough see clearly.

There is spiritual blindness, just as there is physical blindness; and just as there are degrees of the one, there are also degrees of the other. We would not of course censure one merely because he is physically blind; neither must we condemn those who are spiritually blind, or partially so; nor are we to follow them. We should be thankful for physical sight, and even more so for clear spiritual sight. "That wise and faithful Servant" said, "Though all the virgin class trim their lamps, all cannot see". (C93) God loves all the virgins, even though some be foolish; so too must we; though loving, we must avoid their foolish course. Hence in calling attention to these vital points it is not with the thought of faulting the heart of anyone. (1 Cor.4:14) We note that many of the Lord's Lambs are greatly bewildered, sorely perplexed, painfully unsettled in mind, do not know just what to do, how to decide their course of action, because not "fully persuaded in their own minds". For the comfort, consolation, and guidance of this class particularly is this paper prepared - others do not need it. Many of the Lord's children seem not to understand what really constitutes "BABYLON". Let "That Servant" then speak - "Since the Kingdoms of the civilized world have submitted largely to being dominated by the influence of the ecclesiastical systems, they thus link themselves with great Babylon and so become part of it. Hence this judgment is upon ALL THE NATIONS of Christendom, and individuals will be affected by it to the extent of their interest in its arrangements". (A252;D27, 40,52,147,148,186;G200-214;Ques.Book 94)

WHO THEN IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE? (Ex.32:26;Josh 24:15;1 Kings 18:21) Let such take their stand! "That the saints shall share in this work of breaking to pieces present Kingdoms (not assist in holding them together) there can be no doubt". "The great difference between the Kingdom of God and the beastly Kingdoms of this world, prepare us also to see a difference in modes of warfare". (B100) ""With the sword of His mouth shall he smite the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron". (Rev.19:15) And we may not expect this will be gently done, though justly so. (Psa.2:8,9;149:6-9; 47:3;Rev.2:26,27;11:18) See 2nd Psalm and "comments".(D624;A255-261)

"The Kings of the earth set themselves together in opposition to the Lord and His anointed". (Psa.2:10;D239) "These are banding themselves together to oppose the setting up of the Kingdom of Christ" Pastor Russell. (Dan.2:44) "After the iron rod has accomplished the destruction, then will the hand of mercy be turned to heal, giving mankind beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning". (A256) "The wheat class are regarded as extremists and fanatics". (A147) because they "PERSIST" in letting their light shine, and thus attract persecution". (Manna Apr.8, July 4;C120,147,149) "The test of worthiness for Kingdom honors will be an individual one - of fidelity to God and His Truth". (C141;174;196-10th line from top;F200-8th line from top) Furthermore any attempt on our part to put a "new patch" on the "old garment" will not be approved by the Lord. (C160-161) Above all things we must be honest. (Matt.23:28;Z'14-180;B278-279;F263; Z'03-122)

In conclusion we note our Lord's own words as recorded in Matt. 5:19 READ. "Breaking" a commandment would be going contrary to the teaching of a commandment. The Father's Commandments and Jesus' Commandments are identical - for They are One in Spirit. "Teaching" others that you are justified in "breaking" a commandment might be done as well by actions as by words - for "actions speak louder than words". "Resist not evil with evil", is one of these commandments; another, "Love your enemies". His last commandment, given just before his crucifixion being, "PUT UP THY_SWORD!" saying further, "Him that taketh the sword, shall perish with the sword". (Matt.5:39, 44;26:52) Our Lord plainly declared that the reward for "breakers" of said commandments would be the least place in the Kingdom", before the Throne, palm bearers, instead of Crown wearers. For temporary gain Esau sold his birth-right. Who would wish to follow him? He that is ashamed of me and my commandments, of him will I be ashamed. (Luke 9:26) (F200,258) Be not deceived!

The lesson taught us by Gideon and his faithful, circumspect, watchful army of three hundred, should not be lost upon us, "DARE_TO BE_A_DANIEL! should be the inspiring slogan of every true Soldier of the "Blood-Stained-Cross", every true foot-step follower of the Lamb, through whose sufferings and death deliverance will soon come to all mankind. Surely the true Christian would not go down to Egypt for help. (C316) "We cannot tell", says Pastor Russell, "how great would be the influence for peace, if a few hundred of the Lord's faithful were to follow the course of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and refuse to bow down to the god of war. Like those noble men they might say, "Our God is able to deliver us, but if He does not choose to deliver us, that will not change our course. We will follow His instructions come what may!" How should we stand for Him and His teachings! Could we lay down our lives in a better way than by faithfulness to the King of Kings?" (Z 1915-260-261) "The end of all things is at hand", and each one for himself must now decide by the course he chooses to take, just what the result will be in his own case. "Choose you this day" should be before the minds of all. "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him" (1 Kings 18:21;Josh.24:15) Now to those who desire, or find it necessary, to prosecute this investigation further, in order to become firmly and immovably established in the true principles herein discussed, we refer to the following citations, hurriedly gathered together, though we have not exhausted the "store house" by any means. You will no doubt be surprised to note how clearly and continuously Brother Russell wrote along these lines, following of course, the Scriptures. (Gen.9:6;Matt.26:52;Rev.19:5)

EXODUS 20:13 - JOSHUA 1:5,6,9;24:15 - JUDGES 6:11-16;7:2-7 - RUTH 2:2 - 1 SAML 2:2;3:18;17:1-51 - 2 CHRON 19:2 - EZRA 5:12 - NEH 13:29,30 - ESTHER 3:8;7:10 - JOB 1:8-11 - PSA 1:1,2 - PSA. 2:1-10;25:9,14;30:5; 34:7,9;37:28,35-37;45:9-15;56:11;74:9;91:1-7;98:9;110:5,6;149:5-9 - PROVERBS 1:25;3:5,6;4:25;12:15;22:17-21;25:21,22 - ISAIAH 1:20;2:4, 7-21;3:18-26;5:20;10:1-6;13:4,9,13-17;26:9;31:1-3;34:1-8;63:4 - JEREMIAH 18:21-23;25:26-33 - EZEKIEL 7:6-19;9:2 - DANIEL 2:31-35, 44; 3:16-18;6:16-22;12:1,13 - HOSEA 8:7 - JOEL 2:1-14;3:2-5,9-12 - MICAH 6:2-4 - ZEPHANIAH 1:1-18;3:5-9;2:3 - HAGGAI 2:6,7 - ZECHARIAH 13:7-9 - MATTHEW 2:17,18;5:19,39,44;6:2,24;7:14,16,24;9:16;10:26, 33,39;24:2-24 - JOHN 5:39 - ACTS 17:26,31 - ROMANS 2:5-11;3:8;8:9,28; 9:20-28;10:2;11:4,33;12:2,17,20 - 1 CORINTHIANS 4:5;11:1 - 2 CORINTHIANS 3:2-6;10:4,12 - GALATHIANS 3:1,3;5:1,7,9 - EPHESIANS 4:14,17, 18;5:11 - COLOSSIANS 3:2 - 2 TIMOTHY 2:15;3:14 - TITUS 1:16;3:1 - HEBREWS 4:11,12;5:11-14;10:35;12:4;also 26-29 - JAMES 1:8;4:4,11,12; 5:1-11 - 1 PETER 4:7-8; - 2 PETER 2:9,20;3:8-11 - 1 JOHN 2:15 - REVELATION 14:18-20;19:15.

REFERENCES TO STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES.

A 25,46,48,65,68,74,254-257,261,284,286,341,347.
B 25,27-30,41,64,72-81,96-102,137-142,166-172,174,197,229,236,237, 241,260,261,300.
C 66,89,90,106,120,129-138,158,159,184,188-190,192,207-210,215-220, 225,230,237,288,316,364.
D 19,20,27,49-52,66,143,147-150,186,242,303,313,474,476,481,540,541, 575,578-581,595,600,610,624,627-630,633,636.
E 51,112-116,187-190,236,237,266,316,336,474.
F 41,45,48-50,63,68,76,80,78,82,92,100,102,210,263,264,311,469,606, 607,637.
G 14,22,26,63,64,69-71,119,122-24,127-129,137,143,172,177,196,199-214,243,246-254,263-67,270,276-277,289,291,293,294,299-307,387, 395,404,405,417.

Question Book 94,305,580,677;also Saturday Evening Post July 6,1918 - "Where Red Cross and Army Meet".

Watch Towers: Sept.1,1915-Pages 259-267:-"Christian Duty in War".
Z 1898:252;1902:4 & 357;1904:204;1905:13 & 118.
SPECIALS * "Love & Justice contrasted" 1916:115;"God First"1916:279.
Manna Texts:Jan 19-Feb.1,4,23-Mch 28-Apr 4,8,12,30-May 3,19,22-June 8, 12,17-July 2,4,13,21,29,30-Aug 6,13,18,31,-Sept 4,8,9,15,28-Oct 5,16, 22,25,29-Nov.4,11,17,24,25-Dec.4,7,8,9,16,18,19.

Those who have appreciated this and desire that others besides themselves should be blessed might therefore see the advisability of passing copies along to the needy.

WHOM WILL YE SERVE? - John 19:12-15

"Caesar's friends?or friends of Jesus?
Solemn question for to-day.
Friends of Caesar!Friends of Jesus!
Take your sides without delay.
If ye pause for man's forbidding
Caesar's friendship ye secure;
If ye do the Father's bidding,
Scorn,reproach,ye shall endure.

Friends of Caesar!Friends of Jesus!
Stand revealed:your choice declare!
Who in truth two masters pleases,
Who may rival banners bear?
Jesus' friends account him precious
Give for Him all other gain;
Dearer far the smile of Jesus
Than the praise of worldly men.

Free from Caesar,friends of Jesus
Stand in phalanx!never fear!
Love,severely tried,increases;
Courage yet,the Lord is near!
Onward still,His name confessing,
Weaving crowns to grace His brow;
Lo!His hands are full of blessing,
Lifted for your succor now.

Caesar's friends were we,but Jesus
Owns us for His friends today!
What!shall rival friendship please us,
While the Bridegroom is away?
No!through grace would we surrender
Caesar's things to Caesar's care,
Whilst to God,our God,we render
Filial homage,praise and prayer."

"God shall send them strong delusions that they should believe a lie"- 2 Thess.2:11. Some fear man more than they do God. "The fear of man bringeth a snare; the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom". Prov.29: 25; 1:7.

"HOW LONG HALT YE BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS? IF THE LORD BE GOD FOLLOW HIM!"
1 Kings 18:21

"nothing is more necessary to the peace of mind of God's children than a clear understanding and appreciation of moral principles, and a full determination to be controlled by them". - Pastor Russell.

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO CHAIRMAN

F. McKERCHER, Chairm[illegible]as.
Box 939, Portland, Oregon

COMMITTEE:
I. C. EDWARDS, Victoria, B. C.
DR. E. F. LARKIN, Bellingham, Wash.
FRANK RICE, Seattle, Wash.
JOHN O. JEFFERY, North Yakima, Wash.
H. J. BROWN, Tacoma, Wash.
FRED G. HEARD, Vancouver, B. C.
F. McKERCHER, Portland, Oregon

Stand Fast
Bible Students Association

Born December 1, 1918
"WHEREFORE BRETHERN BE YE STEADFAST, UNMOVABLE."

PORTLAND, OREGON,

December 7, 1918.

GREETINGS IN THE NAME OF OUR PRESENT LORD:

We enclose a copy of Preamble and Resolutions adopted by the first assembly of Bible Students composed exclusively of those who are now STANDING, where all Bible Students deemed it an honor and privilege to STAND up to the date of 1918 Passover. This Convention was represented by many Ecclesias from British Columbia, Washington and Oregon and attended by more than two hundred delegates.

The purpose of this Association is not that of proselyting, persuading, converting, nor condemning those opposed to our faith respecting the "Narrow Way" of self sacrifice and self denial, but that of confirming the faith of those who would be strong, resolute and unwavering in their course Heavenward to its close consummation.

OUR CONFIDENCE WITH RESPECT TO THE CLOSE OF THE HARVEST WORK AND SEALING OF THE SAINTS, ETC. LAST PASSOVER BEING INCREASINGLY CONFIRMED, WE FIND NO OCCASION TO VITIATE THE WONDERFUL PARALLELISMS OF VOLUME 3 STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES.

Comforters, including several former pilgrims, will be glad to serve those expressing a desire for the same, as the Lord may open the way and provide the means; hence if such service is desired your prompt advice is awaited.

"OLD CORN GEMS" (Josh.5:11) made up of selections from Pastor Russell's writings will be mailed from time to time to all who desire to be thus cheered in these days of peculiar trial and testing, though it is not the thought that extended services covering any considerable period of time is needful, as all things to us indicate early cessation of activities this side the vail.

An early reply is desired stating the number of copies of these carefully selected "Gems" from Pastor Russell's writings pertinent to present day conditions, that will be appreciated in your community, and which we will gladly supply without cost.

All Saints everywhere who desire to share in our activities are requested to correspond with our Chairman.

Your Brethren in Christ,

COMMITTEE OF SEVEN,

F. McKercher, Chairman.

TO THE CHURCH OF GOD WHICH IS IN AMERICA, AND TO ALL THE SAINTS EVERYWHERE:

Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

BE IT KNOWN UNTO YOU, That with prayer and supplication unto God by a company of consecrated Bible Students in Convention assembled at Portland, Oregon, U.S.A. this 1st day of December A.D. 1918, the following preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted.

WHEREAS, Now that Passover 1918 is past, and that therefore
the "Harvest" has ended,
the "Gospel Age" closed,
the "Wheat" been garnered,
the "Saints sealed" and
the "Door" shut
as plainly indicated by Bible Chronology and Parrellelisms - a clear and satisfying knowledge of which has been given us by "that faithful servant" in "STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES" and notably in Volumes 2 and 3, corroborated in Watch Towers of February 15th and May 1st, 1918, and confirmed to us most forcibly by present world conditions, together with the Watch Tower of August 1st, 1918 which declared as follows: "Suddenly about Passover certain divinely permitted circumstances stopped the rains from heaven, and then the famine set in, - a sore famine for the hearing of the Word of God".

AND WHEREAS, Since Passover 1918 the Church has been subjected to supreme trials and testings, through which we have come with steadfast determination to "continue in the things which we have learned and have been assured of, knowing of whom we have learned them", and with full realization that we are in a new "age" and subject to conditions, with attendant responsibilities, such as have not been experienced by the Church at any time in its history.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, That a vital privilege awaits, and grave responsibilities confront, the true saints of God, - the "Elijah Class", who are not only earnestly desiring their own exaltation, but relying upon the teachings of our Lord, the Apostles and the Prophets as the Channels of all Divine truth, for their guidance and inspiration, as the source of their comfort and consolation, and proposing that no influence or power shall deflect them from the straight and narrow path made for them by their great examplar and Lord, the various steps in which have been so plainly manifested to them by the Holy Spirit through "that wise and faithful servant"; a privilege no longer partaking as one of its chief elements of the declaration to the world of the early establishment of the Kingdom of Righteousness over the whole earth, - though we still faithfully thus declare, but rather a privilege of promoting the spiritual interests of the "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God", to confirm and stimulate their faith and "stablish, strengthen and settle" all the true saints of God who also are standing fast in the exceeding great and precious promises, in so far as God's providences shall permit us so to do, through the spoken word or printed page, that thus we and they may experience the efficacy of our Lord's prayer for the Church, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are" (Jno.17:11).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we may effectually perform this work and meet these responsibilities we now form ourselves into a working body to be known as the

STAND FAST BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

declaring that such Association shall be only so fixed and formal in its direction and control as shall bring order to our efforts and efficiency to our activities.

AND BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, That the direction of the Association's activities shall be entrusted to a Committee of Seven (with power to fill vacancies) to be chosen by this convention, as follows:

I. C. Edwards,	Victoria, B. C.
Fred G. Heard,	Vancouver, B. C.
Dr. E. F. Larkin,	Bellingham, Wash.
Frank Rice,	Seattle, Wash.
John O. Jeffery,	North Yakima, Wash.
H. J. Brown,	Tacoma, Wash.
F. McKercher,	Portland, Ore.

and who shall formulate a definite plan of procedure and report the same at the earliest date possible to each of the many Ecclesias here represented.

SEPARATIONS of THE HARVEST

Stenographic Report of an Address by

Brother R. O. Hadley

Delivered at the Vancouver B. C.

STAND FAST BIBLE STUDENTS CONVENTION

December 30, 1918

Quite a timely subject in line with our day subject—Seperation Day. In 1914, Pastor Russell set before us the example as the Lord's great leader, by carrying on the work through conventions to a great extent, and that makes me think that perhaps this will not be the last. It appears that the Lord is leading in the line of conventions at this time, and I think among the last things that we will have will be a convention, and then The Great Convention.

I wondered if I wouldn't have a hard time tonight to find anything to say after Bro. Livermore and Bro. Heard had been on the scene, and if it was not for the boundlessness of the Lord's Word and His goodness to us, perhaps I would run short. Bro. Heard and I especially always get along well together. In his very energetic way, he is somewhat offset by my more mild way. It was suggested something over a year ago, if they were going out two and two like they used to, it would be a good idea to send us together. I heard since I came here that Bro. Heard was appointed to go to a certain class, and some of the dear ones not wholly satisfied with the Stand Fast views, wrote that Bro. Heard would not come and they would let Bro. Hadley come. "He might let us down more easily than Bro. Heard." I wondered if their condition would be more mollified by the smoothness of Bro. Hadley than it would be by the thunder of Bro. Heard.

I rejoice very greatly in the truth and in all the plans and providences of Jehovah God so far as He reveals them to us from time to time. I wish to honor His great name and the name of His great Son, our Lord. I wish to do credit through Divine grace to the great plan that He has set forth, and to follow the lines laid down by Him through that great servant, Pastor Russell. What a wonderful order we have in the subjects at this convention; they form for us a lesson themselves, beginning with Stand Fast Day; today, Separation Day; tomorrow, Loyalty Day, and next, the Day of Deliverance. I am glad to hold strictly to the subjects; they are more orderly and appropriate than any I could suggest, so for this reason I speak to you tonight on "Separations of the Harvest Time."

The purpose of the gospel age is well known to Bible Students. We used to think about the world's conversion, the so-called evangelization of the world. Different thoughts applied to what was to be done in the gospel age. We now see very clearly that the Divine purpose of the gospel age was primarily that Jehovah God, under His great Agent, the Lord Jesus Christ, has been gathering out from the multitudes of earth, the Church. There have been other things done, the light of the gospel has blessed another way and other lessons have been taught, but this is the primary lesson and the great thing that Jehovah has been doing. Knowing well the ability of our Heavenly Father to accomplish that which He pleases, and understanding the time features, the parallels and the chronology of the Bible in general, we believe that now the great purpose of this gathering is complete. All down through the age from Pentecost to the present time have been the three classes in the church,—two classes of the church, and one in their midst, —the Kingdom or the Bride class, the great company, and those that have sinned against their covenant. The thought of the separation of these classes and the conditions and circumstances of the Church at the present time, are of paramount importance to each one of us. The reason I say but little concerning the interim between the harvest periods of the Gospel age and the Jewish age is because that definitely we know but little about it,—who were the saints at that time. We have some records left us. We know certain movements, certain leaders, the seven messengers of the seven periods of the church, but speaking according to the Master's Word, He said, "Let them both, the wheat and the tares, grow together until the harvest time." All through the age were both classes of the church, the kingdom class and the great company; as they each one in turn finished their course, they were marked for the resurrection according to their development. But now finally in the harvest period, the identification has been more manifest, and since the end of the harvest, it is still more manifest. We have come to the place now when we begin to know where the classes are, and this is of very great importance to us indeed. In the three years' pilgrim service that I have enjoyed, I could preach to you any sermon that I have used during these years insofar as doctrine is concerned. I have not changed a particle. Not all of those sermons would be proper; but every one of them would be just as true as it was then, and it is especially so in regard to the sermon I preached to you in Vancouver and everywhere, the separations of the harvest time. I quote to you certain things that I said in that sermon, for I could not beat it now; the very things that I said to you then have now come to pass. Lest you should think that I would claim to be the originator of these thoughts, I will say to you that I copied them from Pastor Russell; you knew it then, and you know it now.

In the harvest period we find in Volume 3 there are to be three separations. First, the wheat from the tares. All of us that are here now in the Truth were at one time in one or another quarter of Babylon. We did not know where the wheat was. We had read something about it in the Bible, but we did not know; we couldn't find the wheat,—we could hardly find ourselves, at least I couldn't. I was pretty nearly like a brother that I met in the south. One morning as I was sitting at breakfest, he asked me the question: "Bro. Hadley, describe a tare to me." I did my best; I told him all I knew about tares, and after I got through he said, "Well, I always thought that I was a tare." I never was so surprised in my life; I had no idea that he wanted to apply it to himself. The distinction that divided between the wheat and the tares, the word of truth that distinguished between the two,—was a very fine distinction indeed. Up till 1878 we understand that the Lord's word spoken to the Apostles in the 13th of Matthew's Gospel, continued. The Apostles were listening to the Master's sermon on the wheat and the tares, and some of them said,—I have always said it was Peter,—"Master, if there are tares among the wheat, let us go out and root up the tares"; and the Master said, (Matt. 13:30) "Let both grow together until the harvest and in time of harvest I will say to the reapers, 'gather together first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather my wheat into my barn.'" Jehovah God is the great Fountain Head of truth. He is not and never has been a channel. He is the great Spring or Fountain Head. Pastor Russell states that the Lord, the Apostles and the Prophets were the channels through which the truth came from the great Fountain Head. We add and believe that Pastor Russell was the special channel of the Lord to bring meat in due season to the household of faith, and certain warnings and blessings to the world so far as they would receive them. Until 1878 the preaching of the gospel under the figure of sowing and watering was carried on, but about that time the matter changed,—three and a half years preparatory service for the harvest,—1874-1878. In 1878 the cry went out from that great servant of the Lord: "It is time to stop sowing and watering and to reap the crop." My, what a stir it caused! I understand the first thing that Bro. Russell did was to call together the preachers of Pittsburg and put before them the new message, that it was time to stop the ordinary work that had been done of sowing and watering, and to reap the crop; that it was ripe. Not one of them agreed with it, and so he began himself and sent out the message to those that would hear. Do you know what made such a stir against Pastor Russell? It was the kind of work he was doing and not the amount. Bible students are not great people according to numbers and never have been; we are very few in number and always have been comparatively. The great Methodist Church and all branches have over 6,000,000,—all the bible students that have ever been would make a very small impression on that number,—and yet Bro. Russell caused more stir than anybody else that ever lived, we might say. I have heard it said, —I never heard him say it,—that offers were made to him by the clergy many times, if he would just stop the particular thing he was doing, and join in with them, they would like him well. I remember one instance of a certain writer who began to describe the kind of work the Pastor was doing, and before he got through he turned into a rage. He said "Pastor Russell is robbing our churches of its best soil." He went on a bit and said "These people that are following Pastor Russell haven't got much sense anyhow." You have all heard of the statement at the church door, when you used to put out the tracts, when they were looking for wheat, and the preacher said, "There is no wheat here." He would not have known it if there had been.

One other figure occurs in the same chapter. The gospel age is represented as a time of fishing, and the harvest time was a sorting of the fish. Matt. 13:47: "The Kingdom of heaven is like unto a net . . . . when it was full"—the full number had been completed in 1881—"but cast the bad away." All at once in 1878, the cry went up from Pastor Russell: "Time to stop fishing now and go to sorting the fish." What a tremendous remonstrance went up! It was not the number of fish that was sorted out, that stirred the clergy of the world, but it was the kind of fish? You couldn't think of it in any other way because in numbers they were few. You have heard of people fishing out of season. Just think of me,—I began in 1896, and never heard of it till away down in 1914. As soon as I found out the time for separating the fish had come I joined the band and went to work as best I could. If the sorting out of the wheat from the tares in this general way took fine discernment, and only the Lord's word could show the difference between the wheat and the tares, it would take a still finer thought to know the difference in the two classes in the church, the kingdom class and the great company. When I came into the truth in August, 1914, they were looking for the change of the last members in October. Well, October came, and they were not changed. It did not bother me very much for I was not far enough in the truth, though I was greatly interested in the possible glorification of the church; but when it didn't come, the next Sunday as I went to Portland, I met one of the sisters on the train and I said, "Well, the church was not glorified. What is the next great thing to happen?" She replied, "Well, I heard them talking at a certain convention in California that probably the next thing would be the division between the kingdom class and the great company; and so that is the next thought that took hold of me, and while I think Bro. Yerex will bear me witness that I did not make any fuss there, I went up looking around to see if I could tell the difference between the kingdom class and the great company. You will take into account that I was very new in the truth, and if I would tell you some of the details of the recent separation, I was not long in finding out something about it, from looking into the life of those with respect to the doctrine they were teaching. No one but the Lord could make this separation. So we have believed, and now we are sure that the time has come when this second separation is taking place, that the kingdom class is being divided or separated from all others. It is represented in the Tabernacle. The Holy represents the condition of the kingdom class, those that are to be heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ. The great company were never in the holy. All who will form the great company, while they were in the holy were prospective members of the Bride, and only when they had been dismissed from the race for the prize of the high calling did they become the great company, and as a class they were never such until the recent division that we have had. The Holy of the Tabernacle was covered in; the only light in the Holy was that of the Golden Candlestick. You could see everything in there, but you couldn't see everything,—only such things as were to be seen. Now, for one to see too much would indicate that they had gone into the great company, as well as to see too little. Applying that test, you can see at the present time where many stand. I remember something like 40 years ago, I went to a small show, and there is only one thing I remember about it now. Certain ones were performing in there by riding an old-fashioned high bicycle. If you had asked me the next day, I would have known almost every item there, but now at this distance, I know but very little. So from two standpoints we recognize in a general way those who were once in the Holy and have gone out, those that see too little and those that see too much. When they asked Pastor Russell about certain new tracts, he answered them: "Brethren, when I wrote Tabernacle Shadows, I put into it all that I knew." I have looked at that wonderful, well-shaped forehead and have thought that there was revealed to him by Divine guidance the wonderful message of Studies in the Scriptures, including Tabernacle Shadows, and after writing it in 1881, he watched it until 1916, and if he could make no improvement on it, surely I would not attempt to. Let us then be careful, recognizing that we are standing on holy ground, and if we continue faithful a little longer, we will get into the kingdom.

We learn also that besides the separation of the church into the two classes and the general separation of both classes from the tares, that there is another particular separation,—that of the second death class. I like to look at it in the way that our Pastor gave it, that in the final separations of the harvest time, the Elijah class would be separated from all others. As I come directly to the situation in which we are, it is surely a wonderful one. I do not know whether you all feel as I do, but I am quite sure that something of the kind comes to each of your minds, that we are in a grand and awful time. We believe the last things of the church in the flesh are being enacted. We heard this morning of the soles of the feet of the priests standing, and the Brother said that means you at the present time. In the darkest period in the earth's history, we are walking by faith, one step at a time, and so far, the Lord has opened the way, and I believe that He will continue. What a wonderful experience, having broken from everything human and stepped out as individuals, united in heart and purpose, and knowing by the Divine promise of the Lord Jehovah that we are right, we move on.

It is of great importance to us to look at the movement the Lord has started, and to understand as much about it as possible. The light in connection with this movement that we now enjoy seemed to come first in a special way to these northwest classes. That may be accounted for by the wonderful scripture that the Apostle gave us (Matt. 24:27): "For as the sun cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." In one of the pilgrim trips I travelled four hours to the sun-rising, turned my watch on four hours, away in northeastern Quebec. The comment on that scripture is this: "Even to the extreme west." The reason my mind was attracted to that was because near the close of the harvest, the light of the Shining Sun that had risen in the east shone in my heart, in the far west, the land of the setting sun, and you know that it is dark on the Atlantic coast four hours before it is here, and in some respects probably the last rays of the setting sun at the close of the harvest are shining upon us here in the north-west. Everything in human history from the beginning to the present time has come from the east to the west. The far east was the cradle of the race; the far east was the cradle of our Lord. Civilization has been "Westward-Ho." The Truth began at the Atlantic, and seemingly the final end of the great work will be in the land of the west. After this division of the church into classes came, one of the sisters called my attention to page 264, 1916 Tower. I read it very fully, and then read it to the Portland class, and then I waited for it to come from Vancouver. Knowing that the Lord was dealing with you here, and believing that this certain piece expresses the condition at the present time, I was looking for this identical expression at this identical time. (Read) Brother Russell says: "It will be after the smiting of Jordan, after the division of the people by the message of truth and the mantle of Elijah's power, that the separation of the church into two classes will take place. Thereafter, the Elijah class, the Little Flock class will be clearly manifested, separate and distinct from the great company class. The division, be it remembered, will be caused by the fiery chariot, some very severe trying ordeal which the elect class will promptly accept and enter into,—the Elisha class holding back from the persecution, but not drawing back to sin or a repudiation of the Lord. It will be but a little later on that the whirlwind, probably anarchy, will bring about the change of the Elijah class. This first part we believe to be taking place right now, and that it will affect every ecclesia. That is of great importance to us. I believe, and did even before I received a certain letter from this class, that this was the very thing that was being enacted now, the division of the church into two classes. First the division brought primarily by the articles of May and June Towers, 1918, and from that time to this and from this time on, the separation of the two classes. I felt bad about it at first,—in fact until after I had resigned from the pilgrim service on the 22nd September, I didn't see that this was particularly the work of the Lord at this time, to separate the church into two classes. If there are any of you here that haven't seen this, I emphasize it to you, that Pastor Russell states that at this particular time the Lord's work would cause the church to be separated; and as soon as I found that it was His will and His work to separate the church, then I was glad to co-operate with Him. This is a sweeping statement here: "We believe that it will affect every ecclesia," —and I am certain that it will.

We might ask them then what will be the magnitude of the work of the Stand Fast Bible Students? I do not just know. We are being led one step at a time. I know this: These three conventions have been wonderful. We believe it is the time of the glorification of the church in the flesh, the honoring of the church in the flesh. I do not know how long it will continue, or how far it will go, but it will be wonderful while it lasts. The harvest is ended, the door closed, the saints sealed, and the demons loosed, and the evidence of these great events and conditions are increasing around us every day. What we could accept at first only by faith is now more clear and open to our sight, and we believe that ere long the Lord Himself will demonstrate who are His, placing a difference between him that serveth Him with a pure heart, and him that does not, and probably the demonstration has already begun. That it will affect every ecclesia there can be no doubt.

On page 54, 1918 Tower, it is stated that the Watch Tower is the chariot. We believe that this is correct, and that it is now doing the separating work. We know that the scriptures state that the chariot parted them asunder, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. We believe in anti-type, what happened to Elijah in reality, will happen to the Elijah class. Probably, as many of you know, last Memorial Day I was in Brooklyn, meditating over the fact that the Lord called me there. Though I did not see and do not yet see anything very wonderful at what happened by my presence, I have thought that it must be of importance. Probably I was the only narrow-view pilgrim that was there. For forty years nearly since its organization, the W. T. B. & T. Society had been the agency through which that great servant had sent out the truth, and I suppose that the Lord wanted one of his true representatives there at headquarters to see the last acts that would transpire in the great organization or agency that had been the means through which the saints of the harvest period had been sealed. On the 16th January, 1916, I left home in Oregon City, a cold, stormy day, and the 49th day I landed in Brooklyn and worshipped with them on the 50th day. On the 3rd day of February, 1917, after leaving the Alpha-Omega convention at Victoria, I started again on an eastern tour. Quite a peculiar thing happened. When I reached Lincoln, Nebraska, my route sheet was broken there, and in one week I was called from Lincoln to Brooklyn. At the end of 49 days again I landed in Brooklyn and worshipped with them the 50th day, during which time there was a four-day convention at the Memorial season. Looking back at the conditions and circumstances, we can see more than we could at the time. I notice the strangeness of the atmosphere as I look back. The brethren then were in far greater tension than I had ever seen before. The authorities had pressed them hard for things they believed were sedition. The soldiers visited the home. I was privileged to address their convention. I preached from Ephesians, 6th Chapter, and used as a text: "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God,"—under two propositions,—first, if you do these things, ye shall never fall, and if you do not do them, you will fall,—little realizing how great application it would have concerning the great division that was so soon and even then beginning to take place. Some have asked me if I saw anything there that would indicate that there was a change of opinion among the brethren concerning the issues of the present time. Looking back over the time I can say that there was some, but if these things had not occurred, I could never have known it to be so. When I visited Brooklyn the first time, Brother Russell had a custom on Wednesday evening of receiving any of the friends visiting or local that desired to talk with him. Among others I had a few moments with him. When I came this second time, Bro. Rutherford was carrying on the same privilege, and I had a private talk with him right in the same place that I had a talk with the Pastor two years before, and it may be encouraging to you to know that either the first or second day after Memorial, Bro. Rutherford advised me very kindly to continue in what we now term, the narrow view. He was still as he had been, at that time.

After serving points for about a month in Maryland, in Bro. Ward's home one of the friends said to me: "Bro. McMillan has come," and they told me where he was in another room. I went in to visit him, and among other things he said that he and some others, without naming them, had found that they were not wise in their narrow course, and now had begun to invest in bonds, etc., and Bro. McMillan said, "I would just as soon preach in uniform as not if I could win more for the Lord." **Note**, that the moment this change came, they began to get the idea of winning somebody to the Lord, and I understand now that still more and more that idea is coming into their minds. We believe that the Lord's people are already won, for the Lord said that during the harvest period He would gather together His saints, separating them from all others, and the chronology as attested by the Pastor, shows that the harvest closed, and we have all, at least in the past, been agreed that Memorial season, 1918, was the end of the harvest. From these conditions on, the matter progressed until it came to the great culmination in May and June, which has effected the separation that we now enjoy.

Note that the Pastor states that it will be after the smiting of the waters by the mantle of Elijah's power that the classes will be separated. As I understand the time features, we came to the River Jordan in this picture in 1914 and stood there until 1917, then receiving the mantle, Elijah and Elisha together,—holding to the picture,—smote the waters and passed over and then walked along. (Read) "And Elijah took his mantle and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground." (2nd Kings, 2:8). We understand the mantle to be the truth. The mantle was something that Elijah had with him all the time. The truth has been with us all the time in the six volumes. In this picture, we believe the 7th volume represents the mantle when the truth of the six volumes was wrapped up in compact form with which Elijah and Elisha smote the waters. (Read 2nd Kings, 2:9, 10, 11). The chariot came along and passed between them. There are some things that are profitable to know in connection with this. A chariot is a vehicle to carry a message. We might say that the chariot and the mantle was that which separated between the two classes, the vehicle and the message. I believe that the underlying principle of this separation was wrought by the message that the chariot brought represented in the mantle, or The Finished Mystery. You know how much we heard at the time, and still we believe it, that those who in heart sincerely accepted and since have lived by the message that came by the chariot, are the ones that are now standing. A great many said, "We believe this is the 7th volume, and it is the Lord's message, and we accept it," but a great many of them since have failed, and this is one of the reasons why we are separated from those on the other side, because we still accept the message of all the volumes, and the writings of that great servant, Pastor Russell, while those on the other side have practically rejected them all. We have not changed but are still in line with present truth as it has been expressed all through the harvest period, and I am sure that the Elijah class will continue on to the very end faithful to the Divine word of Jehovah God and its interpretation by the great Angel of the Laodicean Church. (Read 12th verse, 2nd Chap. 2nd Kings, to end of 13th verse). Those who are of the broad view claim that there is a great work to be done. The 7th volume holds out this thought, and we believe that their preparations may not be altogether unfruitful, but the Elijah class represented by the prophet, has no further smiting to do after the first passing over the Jordan. Their meat which will carry them through the one great meal set forth by the Pastor in these years, is sufficient to carry them on to the end. So the great mistake that they make is to claim that the Elijah class is to do a second smiting; and it would seem now that the work left to be done by the feet members might be quite short, but surely it will be grand and glorious while it lasts. The Chariot passed between them, the great message of present truth did the dividing, and now they are in two classes,—Elijah waiting for the whirlwind, ready to be glorified when the Lord wills. The Pastor says the whirlwind will be caused by the coming together of the four winds, symbolic wind. We understand by Revelation 7:1-3 and other scriptures that this will be the loosing of the demons, and surely these evidences are present and probably will be more and more until it will result in a great whirlwind on the earth. The Pastor said, and we believe that it is very scriptural indeed, that the winds or demons would first affect the church, and that then they would go on and affect the whole world and bring on the condition that would do away with the order of the reign of sin and death, and open up the way for

Messiah's reign of righteousness and glory on the earth. So then we see that the career of the Elijah class will end in the way that the scriptures state and that Pastor Russell interpreted to us.

Still further, the reasons why we should be separate, and are separated from the others, not only because of the articles of May and June, but because there have come other changes: We believe that meat in due season for the household of faith was given by Pastor Russell, and that no one has a right to change what that great servant wrote. I remember what he said about this himself. In Seattle convention, 1916, just before he was glorified, some one got out some opposition literature, and the head-note of it was "Pastor Russell has no Right to Change the Bible." Someone asked the Pastor if he wanted to read one of them, and he said, "No, but he has a good start; (referring to above heading); he is right in that, and neither does anybody else have a right to change the Bible." We believe that is true. In a Colorado class at one time they put the question, "Is Pastor Russell infallible?" Each one gave his thought until it came to Brother Sa,—a Jap brother, who, the last I saw of him seemed very fine in the truth indeed,—and he gave the best answer I ever heard: "No, Pastor Russell is not infallible, but he is pretty near it." You couldn't beat that. He never claimed to be infallible and we have never claimed it for him, but we do claim that he has given us the true meat in due season that will get us through into the kingdom if we are faithful to it. As a pilgrim and servant of the truth for four years I have never tried to bring new things, but have prayed continually day by day, and year by year, that the Lord would help me to understand and put forth the truth that is revealed. Oh, how grand and glorious present truth looked to me after having been in darkness in Babylon for all these years; when I found the truth, how glad indeed I was, and how much I have appreciated it since.

Let your minds go to the chart of the ages. That is a grand lesson for us. You remember where the Little Flock has passed the plane of spirit-begetting away up toward the plane of spirit-birth, clear from the great company, and the great company represented by a topless pyramid above the line of spirit-begetting, is represented under the shaded line. I wondered for a considerable time before I found out what that meant, but I understand that it means that the great company are still in Babylon, symbolic Babylon. Don't take that literally to mean only in the nominal church; whoever is in confusion is in Babylon, whether they are among us or wherever they are. The Lord's real ones are not in confusion; they have the light. That is a tremendous picture. I believe the Stand Fast Bible Students are the Elijah class. I believe that the others are the great company,—I do not wish to judge any farther than I have to as individuals, but rather as a class. You know what the scripture says regarding those who are in Babylon—"Wherefore come out from among them." Do we have a message to the great company? A general message. Probably if we knew who they were, we would have a more particular message. In the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, it does not say to you who are the wise virgins, that you shall go over and give the oil to the great company. Every time some new feature comes up and you are directly interested in it, it comes to you with new force and blessing. (Read Matt. 25:3-8). "They that were foolish took their lamps . . . . . give us of your oil for our lamps are going out." When they come and ask you for oil give them the oil as far as you can, or the instructions to get it. You know what it is,—a tremendous message, isn't it? Listen: "Go to them that sell and buy for yourselves." The comment is "into the great day of trouble." The great company are accused of a number of things, lack of zeal, carelessness, and to a certain extent wilful sin, not wholly wilful, but wilful sin in the sense that their robes became spotted, and the Divine justice of Jehovah God states that they shall go into the great day of trouble. This will be the special message. What is the message now? A general one, first expressed in the text of the evening, "Wherefore come out from among them." I believe there is going to be another separation yet. It will be a good deal like this one. How are we separated from Babylon, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society? By coming out from among them. Why did we come out? Because we believe the Lord no longer is using the W. T. B. & T. Society as a channel. When the Lord casts off an institution, He never takes it back. After the churches were cast off, none of them were received back again, and I think it is a safe conclusion that the Lord will never again use the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society. The picture I gave you shows that the great company are still in Babylon, and since He is never going to use any part of Babylon, first or second, the great company will have to come out also, so I extend to any in a general way that might be yet in Babylon, "Wherefore come out from among them."

We have another text that I wish to apply in a general way to those who are in Babylon. It is now perhaps to a great extent the message to the great company. It is a pretty severe one but it is in the Lord's Word; I didn't put it there, and I bring it to you with all the kindness of my heart. At the same time wishing to be firm and pleasing to the Lord, I show you from the Divine Word why all must come out of Babylon. Rev. 18:1-5. "And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory,"—the Lord Jesus Christ in 1874. (Read to 5th verse). So when all of the Elijah class is out, and we believe that they are, at least to a great extent, then the message will come to others that are still in the great company, "Come out of her, my people . . . . . God hath remembered her iniquities." What a picture is this after the close of the gospel age, the great harvest period. Why again are we separated? The Lord says in the end of the age that He would send forth His messengers and sever the wicked from among the just. The separations of the harvest time and of the whole gospel age have been for the final result of separating those that are righteous from all others, and this is the work we believe that is now progressing. The gospel age has ended, and with its end the work belonging to that age passed away, and now we have entered a new age. Since the over-lapping period of forty years has closed, we are in the Millennial age, and a new earth is on hand. The Elijah class is still the general channel of the truth, and their work, we believe, is the gathering together and unifying and confirming the remaining members on earth. How long it will take I do not know. How blessed it is I am assured of by what we have received. I rejoice with you and gladly have entered into this work, and by His grace will continue until all the work committed to me is done. May the Lord add His blessing in Jesus' name.

No. 12 Com Lem missing

"THE SHIP"

Acts 27th Chapter

Stenographic Report of an Address by
Brother C. E. Heard

Delivered at the Seattle, Washington
STAND FAST BIBLE STUDENTS CONVENTION
January 12, 1919

"THE SHIP"

If we had a clock that gained or lost every day, we could always tell the exact time if we always knew just exactly how much it lost or how much it gained. Our consciences, then, are like clocks—we can always tell whether a thing is right or wrong if we have our conscience regulated to something that is always right. What we need then is an absolute standard, and when we get that absolute standard, we can always keep this mind exactly right, because we keep on regulating according to that standard.

Somebody has to stand and regulate that clock (pointing); it is regulated from somewhere. And you and I have a standard whereby we can regulate our thoughts. And anyone who tries to regulate his thoughts without a standard is absolutely and always in error.

Our Heavenly Father has placed a standard for your mind and mine. And it doesn't make a particle of difference what I think or what you think; if we don't agree with that standard we are not Stand Fast Bible Students. They say: "Whatever that Book says, be it pleasant or be it otherwise, we will do it." This is the standard.

"Thy Word have I laid on my shelf (?) that it might not testify against me." The trouble with many is that they have laid their books on a shelf, and that is a pretty poor thing to do. They are getting away off from the Truth. They have lost the "standard." Ignore the standard and you are lost.

There are certain things that could never have been understood until a certain time came. The only reason we are going to speak from the thing we are tonight, is because it has already happened and so we can apply the Scripture. Because it works out and it fits. Brother Russell, in one place in the Volumes says, "Evidently the key that unlocks the door is the proper key for the door." I don't suppose one of us would object to that statement. We could take even the Ford key; if it does the work of the Ford, it is a Ford key. Here is what Brother Russell says: "Whenever we take a picture out of the Bible, or whenever we apply anything that is said in the Bible to certain conditions, it is because we have found that the fulfillment has arrived, and after the fulfillment has taken place, we can always make the picture fit, though not always before."

When the May 15th Tower reached Vancouver and I got it in my office, I began to look over it, and when I came to the article that we all believe to be an objectionable article, I read it very carefully; and I had the most peculiar feeling come over me that ever came over me in all the days of my life. There has never been a Pilgrim on the list more loyal to the W. T. B. & T. Society than I was. I preached allegiance and begged the others to do so 'way from the Atlantic Coast over here and back again. Consequently, when I read that article I shuddered; I had the most peculiar feeling I ever had in my life. I was afraid.

I went to the meeting the evening after, and a brother, one of the elders, came to me and said: "What are you going to do about that article in the Tower?" I said I was not going to talk about it. "Do you not know that the whole class is looking to you for a statement regarding it?" Now there are Vancouver saints in the room tonight and I think they know just exactly what I said that night. I said: "We all recognize that an article has come in the Tower that has surprised us and almost scared us. I am just laying it away, hoping and praying and trusting that the next Tower will fix the article in this so that it will be explained to us. I hope that an apology will be made regarding that article." And I gave them an illustration. I said: "When I was a boy I used to be very fond of hazelnuts. I am yet, by the way. And I used to have a splendid set of teeth; and I have yet, I bought them. I used to crack these hazelnuts with my teeth on my way home from work, but sometimes I got hold of one I could not open. Hazelnuts cost money and I did not have more than the law allowed at that time and I did not want to throw it away, so I saved it up and took it home and used the hammer on it. This is one of the nuts I can't crack so am hoping that the next Tower will bring a hammer to crack the nut." The next Tower had a hammer and pretty nearly cracked my "nut."

The June 1st Tower, if anything, was 400 times worse than the May 15th. The June 1st Tower came into my hands with the infernal article (from the infernal regions, Satan and his hosts) and I shuddered more than ever. I don't know how many in the room had this thing begin to dawn on their minds when they got that second article, but here is one that did. I began to get a focus on something I never saw before, and I tell you I was thrilled through and through. I had thought that the W. T. B. & T. Society would take us safely into the Kingdom. Now I found the most wonderful evidence in the whole world that it had ceased to be the Lord's medium or vehicle for carrying Present Truth to the Household of Faith.

I began to study the Bible when I was twelve years of age and I remembered a text that said something like this: "Can a fountain send forth at the same place bitter and sweet water?" Here was "bitter" water. Now I was on to the secret. It had ceased to be God's fountain.

I don't believe in intuition. That belongs to Jehovah. But something came to my mind just that instant,—the ship spoken of in the 27th chapter of Acts. It came almost the day that I got Tower No. 2; objectionable article No. 2 in the June 1st Tower. I went right into my office and shut myself in to see what it said about that ship.

We Pilgrims used that ship to illustrate the W. T. B. & T. Society. I believe every Pilgrim without exception used it that way. And I believe as truly as I stand before this convention tonight that is exactly what God wished that book of Acts written for. Because that ship does represent the W. T. B. & T. Society. I believe it did. I believe it does. I will never believe anything different. There are forty-four verses of God's most precious Book in which, in my opinion, there is not a superflous word,—there are forty-four verses in that chapter, and every word about a ship. Do you mean to tell me that God would be so particular about that ship that he would allow all that space—a whole long chapter—to record a little incident in Paul's life unless there was something in it for us? "All things are for your sakes."

So I went to the 27th of Acts and began to examine it. My opinion is that we have none of us been wholly honest (I am talking about the pilgrims) with that incident. We all agreed that the ship represented the W. T. B. & T. Society. In the November 1st Tower it is reported that it **does** represent that. We believed it but we were none of us truly honest about the incident. I will show you soon.

Before I touch that chapter of Acts I want to make this statement. Over in Vancouver at the convention, we learned that we had been charged over this whole continent with making a picture out of a New Testament incident. Well, some of the Pilgrim brethren have stated there is no such a thing as a **picture in** the **New Testament.** That is the greatest or one of the greatest errors that was ever preached, because the New Testament is nothing more nor less than a little sample case. In the 2d chapter of John we are told that "Jesus turned the water into wine." The 11th verse reads: "This beginning of miracle did Jesus of Galilee, **and manifested forth his glory.**" And not a soul in the room but can explain that. Brother Russell says that "he manifested forth His glory by doing little things as **samples** of what He is **going to do on a larger scale** when the Kingdom comes." Every incident of the Bible, if you will get down and work, you will find prefigures something to be done on a larger scale. The opening of the blind eyes, raising of Lazarus, unstopping of deaf ears, were merely samples of the time when all deaf ears would be opened, etc. He healed lame legs as a sample, He unstopped dumb tongues as a sample of the time when all shall be able to sing the grand and glorious new song. And the whole of the New Testament is full of these little samples. The only reason that we apply this ship and make the application we do, is because it fits. If it did not we would not apply it.

We are not the first to so apply it. In a 1912 Convention Report Brother Rothwell did. And practically every Pilgrim that has been on the road has used the same illustration.

Before we go to that ship I want to call your attention to another thing that I believe was recorded in Jesus' and Peter's experiences that pictures the same thing. Matt. 14:22 I believe was meant by the Lord to represent the same ship that was meant in the 27th chapter of Acts. "And straightway Jesus constrained His disciples to get into the ship—" Don't forget one other thing before we examine this verse and the others following. Brother Russell made a statement that the Bible is like a grand picture. I got this from him; and he said, "A picture is almost if not totally worthless without its frame." We see these pictures here on the wall. Everyone of them have been framed. Just so is the Bible. A beautiful picture here and there and a whole lot of frame. So when reading about these types or pictures in the Bible, remember that a great deal of the setting is frame-work, so you must not expect to find every single word applicable to this ship. We must expect to find some framework. I am not making any apologies; I don't have to.

"And straightway Jesus **constrained** them—." This does not mean that they were shoved into the boat; it does mean that they were told that was the best thing to do. Why? I believe that ship represents the same thing as the 27th chapter of Acts; viz.: The Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society, and I know why Jesus "constrained" them to get into it. No one could get into the Kingdom without it. There is no other way to get a crown. I know why he constrained them, if this was a picture. The Watch Tower was God's agency, and when we say the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society, we could use a shorter word, we could say Pastor Russell. It is one and the same thing. For up to the time that Pastor Russell died, it was Pastor Russell and you know it was. You know that his will was carried out to the letter in every single iota. He was God's servant to take charge of the Harvest work. The Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society and Pastor Russell were one and the same thing. Do you think that you could have gotten your crown and gone into the Kingdom without Brother Russell? Is it any wonder then that "Jesus **constrained** them to get into the ship?" No one who is a truly consecrated and spirit-begotten child of God could have become so during this harvest age, without Brother Russell or the Watch Tower.

"And when he had sent them away . . he went apart to pray."—Went up into the Kingdom where you and I are going. "And when the even was come . . . . tossed with the waves for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch Jesus came unto them, walking on the sea."—It might be that each watch represented a year and from 1914 to 1915 might be number one; 1915 to 1916, number two; 1916 to 1917, number three; 1917 to 1918, number four—the time that Jesus came. He came in the fourth watch, the fourth year after the times of the Gentiles ended.

"And when they saw him walking on the sea, they were afraid, and Jesus spake unto them saying, It is I." Oh what a frightful period we passed through when Brother Russell died and all of a sudden Jesus said, "don't be afraid, I am with you yet. I have been with you all the way; I promised to be with you to the end." That is what comforted me. And Peter answered him—representing a class here tonight in a great many ways—"Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water." "Bid" comes from the Greek word which means "command"—"If it be Thou, bid me (command me) to come unto Thee on the water." "Come, I command you," and Peter, on the strength of the Lord's command stepped out upon the water and left eleven men in the ship. One left and eleven stayed.

And Peter started off toward the Lord. "Oh my, I walked on the water. What do you think of this? Nothing to hold me up but trusting in Jesus to hold me." . . . . And then a big wave came against him he began to get fearful and began to sink. We do not know how far he went down, but he was saved. Do you know what the others in the ship were saying? One said, "I knew he would sink, he should not have left the ship. He must be crazy or he would not have left the ship. He had no business getting out of the boat." And John said: "The Lord commanded him to come." "No matter he should not have gone anyway. He is sinking, serves him right. . . ."

How timorous some of us were when we stepped out. "No, we won't go back. . . . Don't know whether to get back into boat or stay out . . . . it looks like suicide to leave that ship." Every step that Peter took he was going farther from the ship and closer to the Lord. He was leaving the ship with its eleven men in it.

In John 21:6 and on, we read of how the disciples had been fishing all night and caught nothing, then the Lord came and told them to let the net down on the other side of the ship. So they took the net up and threw it over the other side and it almost jerked out of their hands, and John said, "Say, that's the Lord on the bank. No one can do these things but the Lord." And Peter jumped right into the sea and started off for Jesus. Bless his heart! I love him. How I love him. He did not sink this time, he was going along perhaps nicely, and then began to sink when he got almost to Jesus, but instead of turning around and starting back for that boat, he said, "Lord save me." He did not turn back. Your husband, your wife, your children may fail to get out of it, but don't you depend upon them. "Lord save me, I am going down." I know why the Lord allowed him to do that. To show there was no need of fear in the world. We are going Lordward. We have our faces to the Lord and we are going toward Him. You never make a mistake when going toward Him, and the reason that Jesus allowed him to begin to sink was to teach him that he must depend wholly upon Him.

"Oh thou of little faith, wherefore dids't thou doubt?" I wonder if anyone in the house had the same peculiar doubts after getting out of the ship, and had to have the Lord say to him, "You are coming toward me, never mind the ship. The ship is behind you. Wherefore dids't thou doubt?"

Only Peter left the ship and went to the Lord on the water. The large majority will stay in the ship and miss the privilege of going out to meet Jesus. Only the wise, not the foolish virgins, will get out.

Then they came back and got into the ship again. That shows that you have to go back and get into the ship again (?) No. I will tell you what it means. Do you remember when Elijah and Elisha separated that Elisha represented the Great Company and then ceased to represent that class. After a certain period the picture changes, and when he comes up on the other side of the river he represents the Ancient Worthy class and he immediately performs restitution work. We have that from Brother Russell. When they (Jesus and Peter) got back to the boat they immediately came to land and Jesus and the disciples began a restitution work immediately after they landed. And it means that this is the time, just as the Peter class walks out to the Lord it is the time for the Kingdom to come and restitution work to follow. So the picture changes just as it does in so many, many places in the Bible.

I called your attention in a discourse some time ago, that Moses represented four different things: The Law, Jehovah, The Christ and Second Death. These were all represented in the same man. Brother Russell says so. You know this as well as I do. Just one other little thought in this: When they came back to the ship, I want to show you that it was not a returning to the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. "The wind ceased and the waves went down." . . . . That is when everyone is in the Kingdom—every sealed saint—and not before. When they are all in, the wind will cease. "Be still and know that I am God." Therefore coming back into that ship represents the entrance into the Kingdom, because the wind ceased at that minute.

Now let us go back to the 27th chapter of Acts. I love this chapter. I gave this discourse in Vancouver in June. I said then that the ship representing the "Watch Tower" had ceased to be God's channel of present truth, and we gave this last June. Every single one of the members of the class there then agreed that it was the truth on the matter, even those who are very broad now. Now we see that they are still believing that the Watch Tower is God's medium to carry truth to the Household of Faith. Those very ones who last June came and shook my hand and told me that it was the truth I gave them then, that I had the right angle on that thing, now believe that it is still God's channel.

In the second week in June the elders and deacons (twenty-five) passed one of the strongest articles that was ever passed in Vancouver, condemning these articles, and sent that letter all over the land, sanctioned by every one of the elders and deacons. We had it up before the class and without one single opposing vote it was voted to send that letter out, so it went out from the elders and deacons by unanimous vote. Go today and ask them about it. One of the strongest in the class, an elder you know exceptionally well, rang me up on August 16th and told me that he had not the slightest objection to the letter, the only thing was that we had sent it too broadcast. That we should have sent it to the headquarters at Winnipeg and let that suffice—we should not have sent it so broadcast. There was a letter placed on file in the Victoria class that same week—he had already written a letter which was in the Victoria files—stating that he was mistaken and asking God's forgiveness for having had anything to do with that letter. He told me over the 'phone that he did not care about its having gone out. Can you harmonize those two statements? That is the trouble with the people who stay in the ship.

Acts 27:13: "And when the South wind blew softly . . ." Just sailing along, not a bit of trouble, everything sailing along so lovely, . . . "the South wind was blowing." I came down here to a convention in 1916. How beautiful the south wind blew at that time. Not a hitch, not a single ripple on the water. 27:14: "But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind . . . And when the ship was caught and could not bear up into the wind we let her drive." The very day of Brother Russell's burial tremendous differences of opinion arose among the saints at Brooklyn. Real quarrels took place on the day of the burial. On the day that he was lying in state in that beautiful hall in Pittsburg a regular hurricane started at Bethel. "A great northeaster started . . . and running under a certain island, . . . we had much work to come by the boat; which when they had taken up they used helps, undergirding the ship; and fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven." What does it mean to under-gird a ship? We don't do such things now, but back there ships were not built like they are nowadays. "Under-girding" is binding the ship with ropes to keep it together for safety. I presume that the two hundred and seventy-six on board all wanted a finger in this thing.

What was the under-girding of the ship when Brother Russell died? Did not the Seattle class send in a letter stating their loyalty to the Society? Practically every class of any importance or size and most of the little ones sent in letters to the Bible House: "We will stand by you. The ship will never break apart so long as we stand by you"—and were published for months after Brother Russell's funeral. In the end of 1916 and beginning of 1917 "Towers" you will find the ropes that under-girded the ship. Europe and also America pledged loyalty and support and strength to the Bible House. They "under-girded" the ship. One of the grandest things the friends ever saw at that time was the sympathetic letters from everywhere, so they told me. It was one of the greatest means of comfort they had. And the saints did what they said—stood by the ship loyally and faithfully.

"Fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail and so were driven . . . And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest . . ." Tremendous influences were brought to bear against the Society by its officers, when the attempt was made to wreck it. God would not allow it to be wrecked, because it had a purpose. It was being used of the Heavenly Father. "And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day **they** lightened the ship, and the third day **we** cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship." Why did they say that? Why say who did it? "With our own hands . . ." What do we care who did it so long as the stuff was thrown out? And what is the tackling of the ship? It means "superfluous equipment." Not necessary to the ship any longer. "We cast out the superfluous equipment with our own hands." Brother Rutherford and Brother Van Amburgh, the management, sold the Photo Drama for $10,000 to the Mena Film Company and got the money for it. "Cast out with their own hands" the superfluous equipment. It was practically worthless, not being shown anywhere. So they sold it, cast it out with their own hands. They would not have taken it back only a great furore went up from the saints everywhere to think they had sold out Brother Russell's beautiful Photo Drama they loved so much.

"And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away. But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkned unto me. . . . Now I exhort you to be of good cheer, for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship." There shall be no loss! One of the grandest encouragements to the Stand Fasts. Not a single soul of the Stand Fasts that will lose a crown! You will see as we go on.

"For there stood by me this night the angel of God whom I serve . . . Saying, fear not, Paul, . . . God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island. But when the fourteenth night was come . . . about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country." The year 1917 and beginning of 1918 can apply this wonderfully. They began to realize they were coming to a standstill. Everything seemed to indicate that we were coming to some kind of a standstill. "And sounded and found it . . . 15 fathoms. Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern and wished for the day." An anchor is for the safety of the ship. That is what it is carried for. When the storm got so bad they found that water was getting shallower and shallower. They threw out four anchors. Isn't it strange it was four? Why was it four? There was a time coming when Brother Richie, Brother Hirsch, Brother Wright and Brother Hoskins had to be thrown out. And those were the men who were appointed for the safety of the ship with three others. It was Brother Russell's arrangement that there should be seven members for the safety of the ship. They threw out four anchors. We thought the ship was going to wreck, so threw out four anchors from the stern. There were seven anchors on that ship, seven directors, and four of them were thrown out. I have not the faintest criticism, nothing to say about it. But I do know, and you know if you are in the Truth, four men were thrown into the sea. Cast out. Did the anchors fall off? No, they hung on. Hung onto the ship? Certainly they did, every last one of them hung on till election, 1918, and continued till then to sign their names to articles from the Bible House, as directors of the W. T. B. & T. Society. They held on, would not let go of the ship. Did they ever let go? Yes.

"And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship . . . they would have cast anchors out of the foreship." An attempt was made to throw out the other three anchors. A lawsuit was instituted to throw them out and it would have been carried out had it not been that numbers of the friends wrote to these dear brethren and said what an awful thing it would be to go to law with friends. Vancouver wrote them a strong letter, asking them to go to the Bible and stop the lawsuit. And so the three anchors were not thrown out.

"Paul said to the soldiers and to the centurion, Except these abide in the ship they cannot be saved." Just exactly what I believed about the Watch Tower for the past forty years. I believe when I get in the Kingdom I will find that every single soul that came into the Kingdom and gained their crown during the forty years of the Harvest period, gained it through Pastor Russell, because the Bible tells me that that will be the case. Ezek. 9:3: . . . "And one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side." 9:4: "And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof." It does not say, "You mark some, I will have other servants to do the rest." No. "You mark every single one of them," and not one will be there who was brought in during this Gospel Age but was brought there by "that servant." . . . "Except these abide by the ship they cannot be saved."

We have this argument put up to us time and again: "Do you mean to tell me that a good Methodist that loves the Lord and reads the Bible will not get into the Kingdom?" I don't believe they will. They did not get into the ship. John saw 144,000 and they were all marked in their foreheads. God only had one marker, just one. "One man with the inkhorn," and he did just what God told him to do. I am so thankful I came into contact with that dear man. Oh, I love that man! I heard Brother Livermore say that he loved that man. One of the biggest jobs I ever had was to keep from worshipping him. Brother Russell was the one who marked every single one who will be of that Kingdom, those taken out during this Harvest age. Ezek. 9: He goes up before the Lord and reports the matter. "I have done as thou hast commanded me." "Have you marked them all?" "I will tell you what I have done. I have marked all except those that are to be marked between now, October, 1916, and March, 1918." "What about those?" "I have left material to mark them." Did you read that in the "Tower?" Brother Bohnet stated there that Brother Russell had left in the Bible House plenty of material to carry on the work for an indefinite period; for a number of years. "That man" got ready any amount of material that would have been lasting up to this time and longer had it been used. It was used and used faithfully, we believe, up to last Passover. Brother Russell was "that faithful servant." He could not have stayed here, but he left the material ready to do that marking upon every single one that was willing to be marked between the period of his death and the Spring of 1918.

"Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat and let her fall off. And while the day was coming on Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, This is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing. Wherefore I pray you to take some meat, for this is for your health, for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you." Did you get a big feed the summer of 1917? Did you enjoy it? About July 17th or 18th were you handed one of the grandest repasts that ever was sat down to in the whole world? Did you get a big feed then? Yes, if you are a Stand Fast Bible Student that was the grandest feed you ever had in your life . What a long time we had been waiting—from 1906—waiting, waiting, waiting, until 1917, when that beautiful food was placed before us. Think of it! 1906 to 1917, from the time of the printing of the 6th Volume to the time of the 7th, and then we got a feed. We sat up day and night to read it. We smacked our lips over that feed.

"Wherefore I pray you to take some meat. . . . And we were all in the ship two hundred, three score and sixteen souls." Two hundred and seventy-six people. "And when they had eaten enough they lightened the ship and cast out the **wheat** into the sea." Seventy saints had been living at Bethel for sixteen years and were sent out. Did not only throw out the four anchors, but also sent out seventy other brethren. Some had been practically promised that they would live there the rest of their lives, but they did not. They followed the anchors, the **wheat** did.

Isn't it funny they had wheat on board and that it always represents the saints? It is not funny at all. "And when it was day they knew not the land; but they discovered a certain creek with a shore into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship." I see an opening, if we can get in there we will be safe. "And when they had cut the anchors they left them in the sea. . . ." (Weymouth). January 5th, 1918, election these four anchors were dropped completely from the Society. I was there. They let the anchors fall off at that election. We deliberately chopped off all those anchors by selecting others to take their places, and from that time on they have never signed themselves as directors of the Society. They were no longer hanging on.

"And falling into a place where two seas met, they saw an opening." "If we can get into that opening we are safe." About that time, around Passover, things were getting pretty fierce. The authorities were visiting the Tabernacle and trying to stop the talks from the platform. Brother W. Baker, of the Bethel home, was delivering a discourse there one Sunday and the authorities came in and tried to break up the services. A vote was taken among the friends assembled as to whether they wished to hear Brother Baker or the authorities, and the authorities were voted out, but after the services they stopped the friends outside and demanded that they support the government in their war measures, etc., or the home would be closed. It did look mighty bad, indeed. The time had come to "shut the door," **and had they allowed the Lord to do so,** He would have shut the door, but they did not allow it. "If we just compromise we will be safe. There is the opening." That is what the authorities told them. They said: "You will have to do this or we will shut you up. You will have to compromise on these things, you will have to buy." " . . . Hoisted up the mainsail to the wind and started for the shore,"—when they bought bonds. Making for a place of safety—nothing else in the world. Did they make it? No. They did not reach safety at all.

"And falling into a place where two seas met . . ." I suppose you know what that meant. When two seas meet they cause a rip tide, a dangerous place. This ship got in where two seas met. What are these two seas? Look back and see what happened, and I think you will see that it was the civil and military powers. That is what they got between. "And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground." They did not get into a safe place, after all. "Compromise will save us," but it did not do so. They "ran the ship aground."

"And the forepart stuck fast and remained unmovable." The forepart was Brother Russell's part. His part was the fore part. Was that broken up? No, that was his part. But "the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves." The hinder part was the part that was added. It was broken badly. Just opposite to what they intended it should do. They ran into the place for safety and were broken to pieces. "The hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves and the soldier's counsel was to kill the prisoners lest any should escape. But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves into the sea and get to land. And the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass that they escaped all safe to land." Let me call your attention to what has never been spoken about to my knowledge by any pilgrim from the platform. It is not fair, if God gives a picture, to take a part of it and absolutely ignore a part of it. This is just as much a part of the picture as the rest. It embraces the statement in verse 31: "Except these abide in the ship." It is not honest to stop here. It is misleading to do so; we have no right to deceive God's people. Everyone of the saints here tonight knows that there came a time when it was just as dangerous to stay in that ship as it was dangerous at a previous time to leave it. Not a soul could stay on that ship and be saved when it was time to leave. And I am here tonight to say that that ship, to my mind, represents the W. T. B. & T. Society. We have all accepted that. If that is true then there came a time, or has come a time, when in order to be safe you will have to leave what you used to have to be in, in order to be safe. My own opinion on this matter—from this Scripture, Acts 27:43-44—is that not one single saint that remains in the ship, now that they are called out, will ever have a crown. I firmly believe it. Because God has made a statement that we can't dispute. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins," and that pertains to the I. B. S. A. just as much as to the nominal church, because they are doing the very self-same thing that the nominal church is doing.

"Except ye abide in the ship ye cannot be saved." I am confident that if anyone left that ship before God had finished with it, they would have lost out also. But I am just as confident now that those who now stay, in spite of what this Book says, are in just as much danger as those who left before the time to do so. As long as I am here I am going to call your attention to the fact that the Watch Tower ceased to be God's medium for serving present truth to the Household of Faith last Passover. I know, because it is proven by five different proofs.

The first proof is that God allowed the heads of the Society to be placed in Atlanta, Ga., prison on twenty-year sentences. If the Lord wanted that Watch Tower to run and had selected Rutherford as the man to run it, he would not have allowed them to be removed to where they could have no power to serve at all. Nothing on earth could have removed them from that position so long as the Lord wanted them there.

The second proof—the sending forth of error. Every one of us noticed that it was absolutely contrary to what Brother Rutherford had preached in 1917. Contrary to what he had preached in the Stadium in Tacoma at that wonderful Convention. You know it is different—absolutely contrary. He gave us as illustration: When he was a lawyer he had made the statement that if two men fought a duel contrary to the laws of the land and another man carried the bandages, and was present at that duel, when the law takes hold of the men who fought the duel it also takes hold of the man who carried the bandages, and they all get the same sentence. What was he illustrating? You know. How did it come, then, that shortly after Passover all this changed? Because they saw the "creek" and they compromised. When the articles came out in the "Tower" every one of us refused to accept them. There were very few who did not refuse them. How did we allow ourselves to be pulled over from what we had been taught to believe? A few were not pulled over, because Jesus Christ said: "If it were possible, they would deceive the very elect." Thank God, they could not deceive the very elect. They printed rank error in that paper. I am glad it was the rankest thing that ever was published, because God's children recognized it, said it was not true. They could not swallow it.

Third proof: The Watch Tower itself declared that the channel of present truth had ceased. ". . . Joseph's brethren dwelling with their father in the land of Canaan, had all professed faith in God and had dwelt in abundance. Now, too, God's children have had an abundance of spiritual food, the Word of God, up to the time of the closing of the door of membership in the Bride of Christ—at or about Passover, 1918. Abundantly did the rain, the present truth, come down from heaven; the Truth of God descended from the spiritual heavens upon all believers everywhere. Suddenly, about Passover, certain divinely permitted circumstances stopped the rains from heaven; and then the famine set in, a sore famine for the hearing of the Word of God. The only real spiritual food anywhere is that within the storehouse of the anti-typical Joseph." It is an absolute fact that at Passover time the channel ceased because there was no more spiritual food. The only spiritual food now is stored up and you know what that is. The seven Volumes of Scripture Studies and the back "Towers." (This "Joseph" article is in the August 1st, 1918, Tower.)

Fourth proof: Joshua 5:9-12. I think most of us believe that the "manna" referred to here is also represented in the "Tower." It represents present truth coming to their table every morning when the children of Israel camped at Gilgal. They held the 40th Passover from the time they left Egypt then. The 40th Passover from the time the Harvest started was last March. On that identical Passover, the Bible says the Manna ceased the day after they had eaten of the old corn of the land, which was two days after Passover.

Over 2,500 years ago God put in picture exactly what was published in that "Tower" that the Manna ceased two days after Passover, the 40th Passover after they left Egypt, representing the 40 years of the harvest period. What a wonderful thing that God had placed in that 5th chapter of Joshua exactly what has happened here.

Fifth proof: Months ago the Canadian Government said, "You shall not bring any of those Towers across this line any more." We were not allowed to receive any more Towers over there. "Don't you get any Towers there now?" No, they are stopped and have been for months. What has that to do with it? A whole lot. Brother Russell stood on our platform and made this statement: "Canada has the greatest number of Bible students per capita of any place in the world." Don't you think there might be a few saints among these Bible students? And don't you think that God is mighty bad to shut off their "Towers?" Maybe some will say, "He could not help it; it was the Canadian Government." Do you not think he could have helped it if it had been necessary for us to have it? Do you know why he did not allow it to get in? Because it was of no use to us, and I believe we are getting along better without it. I believe those that are tampering with it now are not going as fast as those who are not tampering with it. Every single, solitary issue is false. God has no respect of persons and if it is meat in due season for you it would be meat in due season for us. If it is not for us, it is not for you. If I need it, you need it. Therefore God is allowing the Canadian brethren to be starved spiritually if He is still using that as a channel for present truth.

Paul told the men to jump on a plank and get to land, and soon the others will come along. Those who are standing now are good swimmers. They are strong, and when he said, Get out and swim, they did. What would a good man do if he saw another struggling along in the water? He would throw him a plank and help him ashore. He would pull him in on a plank. Many here tonight have had a big pull from this Convention. The Bible House has been pulling in planks for the past several months. Brother Yerex, Brother Hadley, Brother Livermore, Brother Wisdom and all our brothers are doing the same thing; but we are headed for the shore, not for the Bible House. Our strong swimmers are helping the rest ashore.

Now comes the final thought. They all got to land. Who are these "all?" They are the loyal Stand Fast Bible Students who are willing to go through water —anything—to get to land. And the Bible says "they all got to land." So when we shake hands tonight I am going to believe that every one of you who shakes hands with me tonight is going to get to land.

And just as soon as they made the land, a great big restitution work started. They brought the sick from all over that place. Restitution work started in. That is what it means. Are you on a plank or are you swimming? Do you know what is needed? Your strongest effort yet. Don't stop. If any person was on a plank they would make strong effort to get in to land. God does not expect us to lay down and expect to be thrown into the Kingdom. He expects us to work out "our own salvation with fear and trembling." And we are going to keep right on our way. Surely we are. We are going to get to shore on those planks that have been provided for us.

Interesting Convention Notes

West Hotel, Minneapolis, Minn.,
February 2 1919.

Dearly Beloved Brother McKercher:

Greetings to your dear heart and to all the dear "staff" at Portland. While the testimony meeting proceeds I will take advantage of the little opportunity to drop a line to you.

Our convention started off in its preliminaries about as blue and discouraging as anything well could be. When Brother Wisdom arrived here, practically all whom he had left standing a couple of months ago were down in the mud—"wallowing in the mire." Only two—Brother and Sister Nosby—who would even have him in their home. However, he and Brother Palmer got near to a few, something after the method Marcellus used in getting near to the lions in the photo drama, and Brother Wisdom thought he would attempt a convention.

Well, when Brother Hadley and I got here Thursday, some of the prejudice was broken down and we had a very nice evening at Brother Nosby's place Thursday, when some were invited in for a little social gathering and question meeting. Some more ice melted and a few smiles were produced. Then on Friday A. M., we started off our little convention and it has never been our privilege to attend anything more manifestly from the Lord and by His arrangement. Our attendance has been around 100 and the testimonies have simply brought the tears to our eyes to hear these dear ones telling of the darkness they have been in and now the light shines upon their pathway once more. O, Brother, to see the faces change from fear and dread to hope and confidence and joy was a sight for angels.

Brother Palmer has been slow but he is now alright. He gave one of the grandest talks Friday afternoon that was ever given. He will go to Milwaukee with us (D. V.). He is very frail.

One sister and her daughter were so against us when Brother Wisdom arrived here that they would not speak to him, but after the first meeting the daughter is now our pianist and handed Brother Wisdom $100 in gold a few minutes ago. And her mother told me she has been starving to death and now she is once more eating at the Lord's table and satisfied. She, too, has a donation to hand in. Nothing is more clearly demonstrated than that this movement is wholly from the Lord and we praise His glorious name and hang on to the plow handles.

I have received an urgent request from the majority of the friends at Estherville, Iowa, to go there between this convention and Milwaukee, so we take that as a suggestion from the Lord and will go tomorrow morning (D. V.). We have formed ourselves—Hadley, Yerex, Wisdom, Heard, into a little working committee with dear Brother Wisdom as our chairman, so that out here on the front we may, as you are in the West, do things "decently and in order."

We hear from Brother Jeffrey that there are only eight standing at Kansas City and that he has abandoned the proposition of a convention there, but after our wonderful experience here starting the work with only two really in harmony and such grand results, we are decided to send Brother John Westcott over there and arrange for a convention as he knows the district thoroughly. Brother Jeffrey is at Springfield, Ohio, looking over the ground. We feel sure that he would not have given up the attempt at Kansas City if he had known how wonderfully this one has turned out.

We are figuring on organizing a Stand Fast class here tomorrow night with at least 25 or 30 to meet at Brother Nosby's home, 3830 South Portland Avenue. The St. Paul friends will meet with these. Now, Brother, isn't that simply a miracle considering what Brother Wisdom found when he came two weeks ago?

Of course the B. V.'s are very angry over our **presumption** in this matter and Judas has been manifested. The elders have warned their respective classes not to attend our convention. Are they not following the course of the nominal preachers, which course we Bible Students have so roundly condemned? Truly, our escape from Babylon No. 2 should be a source of joy and gladness.

Now, dear Brother, we have been sizing up matters and we have been thinking of having a few more of these conventions and at the same time make arrangements for a dandy at Washington, D. C., advertising it thoroughly in and through that whole district. Then all come West, hold another at Portland and in the beginning of April hold a huge **Passover** Convention at Vancouver, B. C., providing, of course, that things will permit. We will have to do what we deem wise as we are too far away from you to wait for instructions on all points.

Much Christian Love,

BROTHER C. E. HEARD.

Extract from Brother Wisdom's Report.

February 3d, 1919.

. . . The first of our proposed Eastern Conventions has just ended. What can I say of it? Words fail me to depict the glory thereof. You will readily recall my last letter. Everything looked gloomy enough at the beginning. How different the result!

Brother Heard says it is the greatest convention ever held when the difficulties were considered. I fully concur. Average attendance about 80-100—yet not the attendance, but the Spirit gauges. This was remarkable. From a spirit of indifference—in some instances defiance—to the spirit of rejoicing which could not be expressed in words was a long step. In a sense we might say the convention ended in a "blaze of glory." It was wonderful! You will have to take my adjectives at their full face value; perhaps the other Brethren can give you some idea.

It is quite manifest that the Lord is behind this movement. None but the Lord Himself could give such a victory as crowned our efforts. This evidence is so strong and therefore convincing that we all feel greatly encouraged and strengthened. We now feel **absolutely** sure that the Lord is especially directing in this particular feature of this activity. Hence we can now go forward in the strength of the Lord as not before. WE ARE ON THE RIGHT TRACK.

W. M. WISDOM.

Minneapolis, Minn., Feb. 8, 1919.

Dear Brethren in Christ:

We had a Stand Fast Bible Students' Convention here last week. We were ignorant of what it really was. Although many urged us to stay away, and even the elders in our class tried to persuade, it was to no avail. We went, attending every session.

We have separated and formed a class of about forty, and our meetings since the convention have really been love feasts. What joy, what peace, we have had since!

Our hearts overflow with gratitude to our gracious heavenly Father for sending these four brethren among us.

Sister Maxon realized that she was sealed, but none of the rest of us did. We saw something lacking, but didn't know what it was.

Please include me as a subscriber. Signed,

E. E. L.

Stand Fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.—1 Cor. 16 : 13

Stand Fast
Bible Students Association

BORN DECEMBER 1, 1918

Committee

I. C. EDWARDS, VICTORIA, B. C.
DR. E. F. LARKIN, BELLINGHAM, WASH
FRANK RICE, SEATTLE, WASH.
JOHN O. JEFFERY, YAKIMA, WASH.
H. J. BROWN, TACOMA, WASH.
FRED G. HEARD, VANCOUVER, B. C.
F. MCKERCHER, PORTLAND, OREGON

Chairman-Treasurer

F. MCKERCHER
BOX 939
PORTLAND, OREGON

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS
TO CHAIRMAN

PORTLAND, OREGON, January 6, 1919.

TO THE SEALED SAINTS OF GOD EVERYWHERE:

Loving Greetings in the name of our present Lord and Redeemer.

We take this occasion to formally advise you that in Convention assembled at Portland, Oregon, on December 1st, 1918, the Conventioners and the Ecclesias there represented (24 in number) formed themselves into a unit or working body, for the purpose of rendering such service in the way of COMFORTING the Brethren as may be feasible and required - just such as the Lord would wish done, nothing more. The "Preamble and Resolutions" passed and sent forth clearly show this. NO OTHER WORK THAN A COMFORTING WORK PROPOSED. It is merely a unification of classes, joining together, if you please, in order to the better serve one another, even as it is done in choosing Elders to serve a single Ecclesia. ONLY THIS.

A strong force of traveling "COMFORTERS" - Pilgrims - has already been drawn together, for the required needs, whose services will be given free and freely to the Ecclesias who express a desire for same. All of these Brethren are of long experience in the service of the King of Glory. "The King's business requires haste", so whatever is done, must be done quickly. There is no time to waste in parleying. If you wish a visit of these Comforters (Acts 16:40) for encouragement and consolation (Acts 4:36), that you might be strengthened for the final conflict, now at hand, then signify your wishes by sending a postal card to the address below. One of the Brethren may be enroute your way now or soon, and possibly would otherwise pass by some hungry Saints - one or more. We trust to serve every Ecclesia and every individual member of the Body of Christ in some way before the end comes (Matt.24:14) in the final and absolute sense.

In addition to these "COMFORTING CALLS" we purpose to send forth twice a month some choice selections, pertinent paragraphs, from the writings of "THAT FAITHFUL AND WISE SERVANT" to all, everywhere, who desire the same, under the title "OLD CORN GEMS". These will be in manuscript form, compiled from the Volumes and Old Towers. A postal will bring you these visits and to as many names as you will send. Thank you.

The Lord is furnishing the means - men and money, and loving hearts are prompted, as we believe, by the Lord to this activity, and strong hands and willing minds, guided only by the Lord, are carrying it forward. You may have some part in the movement. if you so desire, but we urge no one to join with us. This is the Lord - so let Him do what He will. Perhaps you will consider it a privilege.

We subscribe ourselves "Your Brethren in Christ", our Glorious King, whom we earnestly "serve with a pure conscience", for "He hath not given us the spirit of fear"; therefore we are not "ashamed of the testimony of our Lord".

With Christian love,
Your Brethren in Christ,
F. McKercher, Chairman.

OLD CORN GEMS

NO. 1.

"They (the children of Israel) did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover" - 1918 - Joshua. The Daily Supply of manna, upon which God's typical people had subsisted for forty years, ceased after they had eaten of the "OLD CORN". They did not eat manna any more thereafter - no NEW LIGHT. - Josh. 5:12; G-312.

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"I will feed them in a good pasture; in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord". - Ezek. 34:14, 15; G-536:2,3. "I will give you pastors (Pastor Russell) which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding". - Jeremiah 3:15.

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The Lord has graciously promised to supply all our needs according to His riches in glory; and further. He has thus far led us beside the still waters and caused us to lie down in pastures green. This we all gratefully acknowledge. Not one word of His good promise hath ever failed us.

For forty years the Elijah Class have gone "in the strength of the meat" (1 Kings 19:8) provided and left in the Storehouse by "THAT FAITHFUL AND WISE SERVANT", who had been raised up for that very purpose. And bear in mind, he was to have no successor in this respect. Hence, we should look for no "NEW LIGHT", but feed on the "OLD CORN" instead, fragments of which will be found herein. SEASONABLE and well SEASONED "meat" will be found in every paragraph, for the reason that "THAT SERVANT" provided the same.

BEWARE OF SOPHISTRIES!

TAKE HEED! TAKE HEED!

Beware, dear brethren, of anything and everything provided by any one other than "THAT SERVANT" even though it come to you labeled "MEAT" and in a pleasing guise and familiar form. SAID THE GREAT APOSTLE: "If we or an angel from Heaven should bring you good news different from that which we have already brought you, let him be accursed. What I have said I repeat - if any one is preaching to you a good news other than that which you ORIGINALLY received, let him be accursed. For is it man's favor or God's that I aspire to? Or am I seeking to please men? There are some persons who are troubling you, and are seeking to distort the good news. For I must tell you that the good news which was proclaimed by me is not such as man approves of ". Gal.1:8,10,7,11 - Weymouth.

As a "WISE SERVANT" Pastor Russell provided "MEAT" in sufficient quantity and of the right quality if properly assimilated to give the needed strength to carry us to the end of our pilgrim journey. Besides, there is no taint in this "MEAT" - Old Corn. Ptomaine poison is usually discovered in the food only after it has been eaten.

[illegible]

Foreseeing the present needs of the Elijah Class, God graciously guided that "WISE SERVANT" to provide the same; and having been faithful to the honor conferred upon him he died, and reported the matter accordingly. - Ezek. 9:4-11. The fulfillment is always greater than the type.

OLD CORN GEMS

Are made up of pertinent and pungent selections from the writings of "THAT FAITHFUL AND WISE SERVANT", covering a period of about forty years. These selections will surprise you when you note that, though written many years ago they read as if written but yesterday. Truly a Prophet hath been among us. - Ezek.2:5.

Being WISE he accordingly foresaw the needs of the Church in its last earthly experience; and being FAITHFUL he, like one of old, left an abundance of food (Old Corn) in the Storehouse against the time when there should be a famine in the land, and a SORE famine at that. Surely that time is now upon the Church, as suggested in the Watch Tower of August 1st, 1918, page 232.

Therefore there is nothing NEW in the contents of this little Paper, but there will be found "GEMS" of suprising character and rare value at this particular time, made, as they are, of "OLD CORN" from the storehouse, placed there under Divine Guidance by our Beloved Pastor, whom to know was to love.

The purpose in sending these "GEMS" forth is to strengthen and comfort the dear Saints of God everywhere, as far as the same may be possible, in this dark night of their severe testing, just preceding their change and exaltation. Can any one who has the Spirit of Truth doubt for one moment that this "DARK NIGHT" is upon us right now? According to the Watch Tower of May 1st, 1918 it began at last Passover. When the "NIGHT" has once set in we are not to look for the sun to rise at the MIDNIGHT HOUR, shine for a short period - long enough to "Smite Jordan" the second time, then again hide his face.

The NIGHT is already here, but thank God, the "morning cometh" and that quite soon. The shadows of earth will soon pass away, and soon too in our Glorious Redeemer's likeness will all the faithful in Christ awake - those who have STEADFASTLY refused to "BOW THE KNEE TO BAAL" because they had a proper "RESPECT UNTO THE RECOMPENSE OF REWARD". These choose rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God than enjoy freedom by conforming to the ways of this present evil world.

TO THE FAITHFUL IN CHRIST, THE LOYAL SAINTS OF GOD, this little paper goes, with our earnest prayers that it may be blessed of Him to the comfort and consolation of one and all into whose hands it may come. If you like it, then cherish it; if not, pass it on to some one more appreciative of Divine Goodness. Remember, burning of Bibles, etc. was the passtime of the "DARK AGES" and all Bible Students agree that such was the work of Satan, operating through human agencies. We know that no TRUE DISCIPLE of the humble and lowly Nazarene would descend to such acts. There are two Masters and two spirits operating in this world. - Rom. 8:9.

THEREFORE PROVE ALL THINGS.

And when you have PROVEN a thing, let no one persuade you that you are wrong. The mind is the battle ground (G-126). Keeping your mind open then after being CONVINCED is to invite the adversary's attacks. What was proven to be right in 1916 and previously, and in 1917 and up to Passover of 1918, cannot by any process of sound reasoning be shown to be WRONG since then.

READ 24 PAGES DAILY FROM THE VOLUMES.

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PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE.

"Nothing is more necessary to peace and prosperity of the Church than a clear understanding of moral PRINCIPLES with a full determination to be controlled by them. Many Christian people spend years of their experience without making any great progress. The difficulty with many is a failure to recognize the basic PRINCIPLES underlying the Divine Law". Z'16-115. There are certain PRINCIPLES laid down in the Bible, and we need to grasp these PRINCIPLES and apply them in our daily lives. Those who have for some time been drinking from the Fountain of Truth and feeding at the Table of the Lord, where the food is pure, unadulterated and nourishing, should be fully established in these PRINCIPLES. We should be able to DISCERN between Truth and Error on every important point. We should know what we believe and why we believe it, and be COURAGEOUS AND UNCOMPROMISING in declaring the Truth". Z'15-15.

"The Bible does indicate that there will be a certain time when we shall find it necessary to stand for PRINCIPLE, from which we should NEVER DEPART. The Principle relates to individual conscience. Whoever will violate his conscience will surely do injury to himself, no matter how well intentioned he may be". (From Pastor Russell's last Discourse, delivered less than 48 hours before he died.)

"If we are to be judges of the world how shall we be fitted for this position if we do not learn how to take the PROPER VIEWPOINT here?

"The Truth embraces all the Scriptural Teachings relating to Christ and His work, and to our relationship to Him as members of His Body. We should be clear in respect to what the Lord taught and why He taught it. We are to be THOROUGHLY FURNISHED. Those who are so unfair in mind as to tenaciously hold to that which they have never PROVED by sound logic or the Word of God, are rightly called bigots. But those who in simple child-like faith firmly hold to what God has inspired or caused to be written for our instruction is not a bigot, but a strong, established character, and will stand when all the structures built upon the numerous theories and imaginings of men have failed. The 'GREAT DAY' now upon us is trying every man's character structure 'of what sort it is' and BUT VERY FEW WILL STAND THE TEST. The Lord will not accept undeveloped sprouts for the Kingdom". He wants strong sturdy trees of righteousness". Z'14-313.

"God holds men accountable, not only for what they know, but for what they might know if they would apply their hearts to instruction". D-49.

"Those who successfully stand in this 'evil day' will prove the metal of their Christian character; for so strong will be the current against them that none others will be able to endure to the end."D-66.

"When God's chosen people abandon His Word and His leading, and seek to ally themselves with the nations that know not God, and to blend Divine Truth with the world's philosophies, they take such steps at a peril they do not realize. THEY DO WELL TO TAKE WARNING".D-239.

"Let us be more and more of one mind with the Lord, His friends must be our friends, His enemies, our enemies." Z'16-262. "We encourage positiveness and courage". Z'16-329.

"The devil makes a most desperate resistance to the new order of things, enlisting the hearts, hands and pens of as many as he can deceive". D-359. "Satan achieves no greater triumph than when he seduces a soul once sanctified by the Truth". E-294. "A person who is indifferent to matters of right and wrong is indifferent to the character of God. WHATEVER IS WRONG SHOULD ALWAYS BE OPPOSED BY OUR NEW MINDS". Z'12-338.

"We are to look well to the rules which belong to this New Order of things, of which we have become members. There may be times when even the brethren will feel aggrieved rather than pleased at our efforts to serve them". Z'14-316.

"Study therefore your course and conduct; study to shield yourself and others from error and from a worldly spirit; and study to aid others in the Narrow way". Z'02-318.

"We might have suggestions from the Adversary that if we would not be too straight-laced, but co-operated to some extent with the world and its spirit, we might get along better and have greater influence over people. This was his argument with the Master: 'Co-operate with me and WE will bring the world where you can give them great blessings' Temptations of this kind often come to the Lord's people. WE FEAR THAT MANY OF HIS PROFESSED FOLLOWERS HAVE COMPROMISED WITH THE WORLD AND THE ADVERSARY. This surely has been a grave and costly mistake". Z'15-296.

"Quite a number are disposed to sympathize and fraternize with those who have come under Divine condemnation. We are told by St.Jude that the destruction of Sodom was set forth as a type. Those who assume to be more gracious than the Lord, make of themselves OPPONENTS, who instead of being students of the PRINCIPLES of righteousness, attempt to be judges of Jehovah. The proper attitude of heart accepts God's decision as both wiser and more just than our own". Z'16-261.

"The invitation is to suffer with Jesus if we would reign with Him We must not faint before we reach the end of the journey. 'The Lord your God doth prove you'. In a Parable our Lord represents some who, when the Sun of Righteousness arises, are not sufficiently LOYAL to PRINCIPLES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS to stand". Z'16-189.

"The crime for which Jesus suffered banishment was His faithfulness as the Lord's mouthpiece. The beloved Disciple in some measure represented the Last Members of the Body of Christ, and if his exile in any degree represents the ostracism which the Lord's followers may expect in the close of this Age, a complete isolation from others and a treatment implying that they are prisoners, they may take comfort from the thought that our Lord's favor and revelation to St.John more than offset his persecution". Z'16-343.

"Oh, what sorrow it gives us at times to behold some not standing well the testing of this hour, some who are developing tendencies of

WEAKNESS, DISLOYALTY to the cause of God. And unless these are recovered they will surely be CUT OFF FROM MEMBERSHIP IN THE BODY OF CHRIST". Z'06-309.

"As Papacy established priesthood over the Church so Protestantism has established the same. There is a seeming show of liberty at prayer meetings, but it is only upon the surface. The Church Creed is the rule, NOT THE WORD OF GOD. If this is not sufficient, they must have a sort of Church trial and excommunicate him - disfellowship him (kill him). The trial, by the way, gives evidence of another likeness of the 'BEAST' - namely THE EXALTATION OF THE TEACHINGS OF THE ORGANIZATION ABOVE THE WORD OF GOD. Such are tried according to the authorities of their Church". Z'80-1,2. "IT WAS THIS ECCLESIASTICAL MIND AND THIS ECCLESIASTICAL CONSCIENCE WHICH CRUCIFIED JESUS. The ecclesiastical conscience holds the precepts so near the eye, that it HIDES THE PRINCIPLES. It substitutes petty thumb-nail rules for the FUNDAMENTAL LAW OF RIGHTEOUSNESS; and makes religiousness a substitute for righteousness. It puts technical priests and proprieties in the place of CHARACTER". Z'15-339. "Our Lord's words are not one-sided, not directed merely against sin in one place. Sin is reproved by Him as much when found in His most earnest followers as when found elsewhere". Z'16-345.

"It is asserted that Papacy is a usurpation of the titles and power of the True Head, and claimed their rights to the individual liberty. This was a severe test of true Saintship - Would they go into captivity and join in the usurper's ranks, or would they remain faithful to the true King and wait for the Kingdom which He promised to establish? Those whose names were written in Heaven stuck to the Word, and sealed their testimonies by death". Z'80-1,2. "The same situation now confronts the saints, in the matter of aiding in some way the murderous spirit of the governments which are permeated by Antichrist's spirit. C-199.

"A 'BEAST' is a Government. To be a symbolic 'BEAST' a church must become an element in a Government. And all who support such by presence, influence or money are abettors of evil, and supporters of false systems". Z'80-1,2. "If you are giving them your influence, UPHOLDING THEM, you will surely be partakers of their plagues. THIS IS A FAIR WARNING. You may be His children, but if you fail to obey the Lord through FEAR OF EARTHLY LOSS it will prove that these things are more precious to you than His favor, and HE WILL TREAT YOU AS HE DOES HYPOCRITES". Z'14-180.

"The Lord's symbolic prophecy tells us that the 'IMAGE' will receive life and will become as active as the 'BEAST'. Worship of the symbolic 'BEAST' (church and state) and his 'IMAGE' is to be the great test of professing Christians. And we have the inspired Record as authority for the statement that only those who REFUSE to render worship to same will be counted of the Lord as 'OVERCOMERS'. The faithful few will be exposed to fiery experiences, will be boycotted, slandered in every conceivable way, and OFTEN BY THOSE OF WHOM THEY LEAST EXPECT IT". Z'99-170.

"All classes of Christians must bow, all must in some way, give evidence of their support of the 'IMAGE' (Red Cross, Y. M. C. A. Salvation Army, Knights of Columbus), either a public open profession, hence supporters (mark in forehead), or at least the giving of some influence or assistance to the PRINCIPLES of the 'IMAGE' organization (as just stated) which is the right-hand support". Z'80-1,2.

"The Scriptures show us that in this general rupture the nominal Church will be gradually drawn more and more to the sides of the gover ment (supporting that which God has condemned to destruction) and WILL FINALLY FALL WITH THEM". A-333. (Have you observed what the Watch Tow Bible and Tract Society are doing in this respect?)

"The fallen spirits have been under restraint for these many centuries, but they have exercised their influence to whatever extent they had permission. If they had had unlimited power they would have wrecke the world long ago. Apparently God will soon cease to restrain them. They will then proceed to vent their fury upon humanity. The whole earth will be filled with violence. We have reason to suppose that they will vent their first anger upon the Lord's people". Z'14-166.

"It is evidently God's intention to allow the MINDS of His little Ones to be come an OPEN BATTLE GROUND. Without actual experience it is impossible to conceive of the intensity of such struggles. Interpretations of the Scriptures, ingenious but misleading beyond description, are projected into the mind. We know the Lord Jesus began His ministry with 40 days of conflict with the Adversary". G-127. "When the demon test comes, THOSE WHO HAVE THE MARK OF SONSHIP, WILL KNOW IT AND WILL STAND THESE TESTS WHILE ALL OTHERS WILL SURELY FALL". G-129.

"It is only if we faithfully ENDURE, suffer with Christ that we shall reign with Him. Our sufferings with Christ are not in upholding some foolishness, but in active opposition to error, in living apart from the SPIRIT OF THE WORLD. The Lord's side is to be our side in everything. This course will bring us into conflict with the world anc the tendencies of our own flesh, for we naturally love the things of the world". Z'15-149.

"Behold the Bridegroom! Though all the virgin class trim their lamps, ALL CANNOT SEE. D-93. For the Bride to neglect or to be UNPREPARED for this eventful moment would prove her unworthiness of the honor. The wise virgins seek to be in an attitude pleasing to the Bridegroom, and are longing and looking for the blessed union. There will be a test which will cause the separation of the virgin class and prove each individual, and clearly manifest the WISE, FAITHFUL, WORTHY ONES from the UNWISE VIRGINS. IT IS FROM THE WORD OF GOD HIS TRUE PEOPLE GET THEIR LIGHT. But many of these have not been FAITHFUL TO THE LIGHT, and are in confusion. Some are weak in various ways for lack of the Spiritual food which the Lord has provided". Z'15-264.

"THE FOOLISH VIRGINS fail to get clear light, being overcharged with the plans of the present life. They are consequently halting, undecided and measurably indifferent about 'beholding the Bridegroom'. There is nothing in the parable to indicate that the foolish virgins will be aware of their foolishness UNTIL the opportunity of going into the wedding has PASSED FOREVER. Then they will realize how foolish they were in expecting to be owned of the Lord as His Bride. Many now highly esteemed, noted for their works, will be amongst the disappointed". C-192-194.

"UNFAITHFULNESS may lead to the blotting out of some names and the giving of their crowns to others. It is our expectation that this goi out and coming in will continue until the last member of the New Creation shall have been found worthy and all the crowns everlastingly apportioned". F-163,95. (This evidently has been accomplished. See Tower May 1st, 1918.)

"Two classes are brought to our attention in the Scriptures as failing to make their election sure. One of these will not only lose the Reward, but will LOSE LIFE ITSELF. This latter class sin, not ignorantly, but designedly, the result of persistence in that which was clearly recognized in the beginning as WRONG, but which through SELF-WILL they persist in, and subsequently BECAME A GROSS DECEPTION". F-165-166.

"If others waver, we should not waver. If our friends get into the quicksand we should lend them a helping hand whenever possible, pulling them out of the fire. AND WE MUST USE GREAT PLAINNESS OF SPEECH IN SHOWING THEM THEIR DANGER AND IN POINTING OUT THE WAY OF ESCAPE. If after kind and faithful remonstrance they persist in feeding upon that which is such EVIDENT CONTRADICTION of God's Word, let them go. Remember there must have been something wrong in their hearts if they were His children at all. Let us remember too that the Lord has promised to keep and guide the MINDS of those whose hearts are TRUE to Him". Z'16-262.

"A heart at peace with God and instructed in His Word (wise) is prepared for whatever may come of Joy or Sorrow". Z'16-296. There never was a time when more strength of character and more courage were needed than just now", Z'15-181.

"It was our Lord's FAITHFULNESS to the Truth (the same Truth then as now) that brought upon Him the opposition of those who were blinded by the Adversary. IT WAS HIS WITNESS TO THE TRUTH THAT COST HIM HIS LIFE. Similarly all of the Lord's children are to bear witness of the Truth". Z'99-123. "The Call of the Church is to let their light shine and thus ATTRACT PERSECUTION (not to side-step or try to dodge it, and to endure the persecution for righteousness' sake, and be rightly exercised by it in patience, kindness, pity and love". Z'99-100. "The Great Refiner is watching to see how the precious metal of our characters reflects His Image. In every trial He watches to see what INFLUENCE CONTROLS our actions, whether of worldly policy, personal friendship or earthly loves, OR LOVE OF PEACE AT ANY COST, or whether we are controlled by the NAKED PRINCIPLES of Truth and Righteousness, and whether we will defend these PRINCIPLES with zeal and energy at any cost of labor and suffering". Manna, June 17th.

"The test is being made along the line of HONESTY; and those who love the favor of men rather than the favor of God, and who dishonestly confess a lie will be given up to the lie (2 Thess.2-11) and will be PERMITTED to blight their eternal interests". (Rom.13:11-13) Z'03-122.

"Christians who purchase PEACE with things CONSECRATED to the Lord are punished therefor by getting into the very difficulties they sought to avoid". (Comments 2 Kings 18-16). "Antichrist now finds its expression in the so-called 'Christian' governments of the world founded, as they are, upon its teachings". G-193. (Can a Christian consistently support that which God has condemned to overthrow and destruction?" Z'16-202.

"The drawing back at first may be only a very slight departure from the narrow way ('perverted viewpoint'), only a looking back perhaps; a disposition to COMPROMISE the Truth. Thus the way is prepared for the arts of the Tempter, who is quick to take advantage of the same. Subtle errors are brought to bear against the judgment; pleasing alurements, with a SHOW OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, are presented to the FLESHLY MIND, and almost imperceptibly the soul forgets its first love". Heavenly Manna Apr.8th. "SATAN ACHIEVES NO GREATER TRIUMPH THAN WHEN HE SEDUCES A SOUL ONCE SANCTIFIED BY THE TRUTH". E-294.

"Christians are to be law-abiding, whether they consider the laws just or unjust. (But the LAW of man and the WILL of man are quite different). If the LAW deprives them of their coat, they are to yield it up. If the LAW goes still further and DEPRIVES them of their cloak, they are to be non-resistent to the Law. Be it noted that neither the coat nor the cloak were to be given up MERELY upon DEMAND, but ONLY AFTER THE LAW HAD SO DECREED. And 'COMPELLING' would mean legal 'COMPELLING'. Christians may not claim anything of a Government that an alien may not claim. This does not signify that they may not CLAIM POLICE PROTECTION; for this very thing they pay for in taxation. THE CHRISTIAN IS TO OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MAN". B. S. M.

"The courage, the martyr spirit on the part of the Lord's consecrated people will exercise a great influence and lead to a more careful study of the commands of our King and the rules governing all who are under His banner. Whatever hardships may come to these dear brethren who thus suffer we believe that a blessing will result in their showing forth His praises. We are to remember that in becoming Soldiers of the Cross, we voluntarily gave up all of our earthly rights in order that we might be participators with the Captain of our Salvation, who PERMITTED all his rights to be TAKEN from Him. Having given allegiance to the Higher Power, we are to HEED HIS COMMANDS AS PARAMOUNT". Z'16-221.

"As no man is able to serve two masters and satisfy both, no more can he serve God and righteousness, and at the same time be pleasing and acceptable to the Adversary and THOSE IN HARMONY WITH HIM. Those who would lay up treasures in Heaven and be rich toward God, must be willing to become of no reputation amongst those, WHATEVER THEIR PROFESSIONS who are serving Mammon, present life". Z'00-318.

"There is no other way that we can attain the New Nature than by accepting the Lord's invitation to DRINK OF HIS CUP and be broken with Him as members of the One Loaf, and thus attain with Him resurrection glory". Z'01-76.

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PLEASE NOTE:-

Let no one not STANDING with us, be disturbed at receipt of this copy of "OLD CORN GEMS", nor at receipt of another copy. We do not know where you STAND. That is what we are endeavoring to learn.

As rapidly as we learn who are and who are not STANDING in this evil day, our mailing list will be corrected.

A response from you will be necessary to the securing of further issues.

OLD CORN GEMS

NO. 2.

* *

PROVE ALL THINGS

There is a way that SEEMETH right unto a man,
but the end thereof are the ways of death.
Prov.14:12

Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and
doeth it not, to him it is sin.
Jas. 4:17

More than eighteen centuries ago Brother John wrote:

"Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but put the spirits to a test to see whether they are of God, for many _false teachers_ have gone out into the world." "Furthermore, the Great Master Himself forewarned that there should arise 'false prophets - teachers - displaying wonderful signs and prodigies, so as to decieve, were it possible, _even God's own people_'." (Weymouth)

Then again Brother Paul warned that "God will send them a MISLEADING influence (strong delusion) that they may believe a lie, in order that they may come under judgment." (Weym. 2 Thess.2:11) "So let us not sleep, like the rest of the world, but let us keep awake and be sober." for "the end of all things is at hand." (1 Thess.5:6; 1 Pet.4:7 Weym.)

Therefore the VERY ELECT - "God's own people" - will "PROVE ALL THINGS" that they accept, test everything by the Divine Measuring Rod. Even amongst the Lord's consecrated children there is too much guessing done. This is a common fault in every branch of Babylon.

Said Pastor Russell: "Accept NOTHING with blank, unquestioning mind. Individual Christians cannot shirk their responsibilities by placing them on pastors and elders". "I know my sheep, and my sheep know me, just as the Father knows me. But a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of a stranger."

HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS
GOOD

HOW HE SAID IT:

"However much the Lord's children should come to respect _preaching_ they should learn proportionately not to receive what they might hear without PROPER EXAMINATION and criticism; they should PROVE ALL THINGS, exercise the mind as to what is logically and Scripturally supported and what is mere conjecture and possible sophistry. They should PROVE what they hear with a view of HOLDING FAST EVERYTHING that stands the Divine test and PROMPTLY REJECT what will not stand such test." Z'03-26.

IF HEART IS RIGHT, HEAD CAN'T GO WRONG.

"Whoever loses the doctrine of Christ has surely done more than get his head confused. His heart must have been separated from the Lord previously, for so long as we abide in Him it will not be POSSIBLE for any of the snares of this evil day to entrap us. He is fully able to take care of us". Z'16-261. "Let us remember too, that GOD HAS PROMISED TO KEEP AND GUIDE THE MINDS OF THOSE WHOSE HEARTS ARE LOYAL AND TRUE TO HIM. If the Lord is thrusting anyone out of the Light, if He is permitting unfaithful ones to be seduced by the great enemy, we are not to follow them into Darkness by READING or CONVERSATION. Had it been proper for these to remain in the Light, He would not have permitted them to be put out of it." Z'16-262.

READING IN A HAZY MANNER

"Unfortunately it has become the custom with many consecrated Christians, as well as with others, to read the Words of Divine Inspiration in a hazy, mazy manner which fails to give to its utterances their real import and deprives the reader of much of the blessings which might be his if he but pursued a more reasonable course and were more thoroughly filled with the Spirit of true discipleship." F-59.

DANGEROUS TO SYMPATHIZE WITH THE WORLD

We should guard against every indication of sympathy with the SPIRIT OF THE WORLD. It is not for us to transform the world and revolutionize society and its methods. We are not in sympathy with any of the present institutions which are based upon selfishness and in opposition to the Divine Law." F-606. "The Saints of God may INFLUENCE the world only by their separateness from it, by letting their light shine, and through their lives the spirit of Truth reproves the world." Z-267.

"In the end, the overcomers will each be so grandly developed that the Lord will not be ashamed of any of them and to say 'Here is one of my followers, here another. They have walked in my footsteps and overcome', but He will be ashamed of any who (through fear) are ashamed of Him". Z'15-119. "UNFAITHFULNESS may lead to the blotting out of some names and the giving of their crowns to others." F-165. Your brethren that hated you and cast you out said 'Let the Lord be glorified'. "During their trial state their names were cast out as evil (as anarchists) * * * they were not recognized as Christians (Bible Students). All this is to be reversed. 'The Lord knoweth them that are His' and in due time will fully and eternally acknowledge them". Z'16-347.

PASTOR RUSSELL AND HIS TRUE FOLLOWERS

"Every true reformer must go contrary to the current of his times, and, in proportion as he has the Master's spirit he cannot fail to be, like Him, a man of mystery to his own generation - a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. Small wonder that these great reformers seemed almost to have charmed lives." G-23. "When the Lord's people hate the idea of a class that seeks to be 'Lords over God's heritage' they hate something the Lord hates." G-26. "They are not all Israel which are of Israel". Rom.9:6. A MAN NOT WILLING TO GO TO THE STAKE FOR HIS RELIGION HAS NONE." G-46

TAKE HEED TO YOURSELVES

"It causes real grief to write that much of the difficulty and danger in the Church today seems to be at the door of the Elders and Deacons. So far as we are able to judge, the same conditions prevail in the Church today which the Apostle pointed out to the Elders at Ephesus". "We have alluded to the ambitions and selfish spirit in the world leading on to anarchy, and now point out how the same selfish ambitious spirit is leading on to Anarchy in the Church. We foresee a Time of Trouble for the world upon this score and a Time of Trouble for the Church. It is inexcusable for the Church to continue under the domination of ambitious men and sometimes ambitious women."Z'16-327

SET THE HOUSE OF THE LORD IN ORDER

"We believe this is the time in which to set the House of the Lord in order. 'We would have a great disturbance if we attempted to do anything contrary to the wishes of our Elders' say some. 'To make a move at all would endanger a division in the Class and how could we think of anything which would result in such a Catastrophe?' It would be better to have a smaller class, operating along the lines which the Lord has indicated, than a larger class UPHOLDING PRINCIPLES contrary to the Lord's provisions. We encourage all the dear Brethren who are in any such trouble to be very heroic. We recommend that such classes vote to dismiss such Elders from service. We are encouraging Positiveness and courage. Here the DIVISION EVIDENTLY MUST COME, AND EVIDENTLY THE SOONER IT COMES THE BETTER IT WILL BE FOR THE TRUTH AND ALL WHO LOVE THE TRUTH. Z'16-328 (From "That Faithful Servant's" last message to the Church, published after his change.)

CHRISTIANS ARE TO BE SEPARATE

"Were we to take a hand in the affairs of the world, we would surely be working contrary to the Divine Program. We are to be separate from the world and to give our thoughts and attention, our Sympathy and interests to the affairs of the Heavenly Kingdom. We can view with great composure whatever events and changes may take place in the world, knowing our Heavenly Father has all power to overrule these matters to His own praise and to the ultimate good of mankind. The world tells us we are too peaceable. They say that mankind cannot get along without a certain amount of warfare. We answer that no one can understand God's methods except as he is guided by His Word, by the Spirit of the Truth. GOD'S DEALINGS ARE DIFFERENT IN DIFFERENT AGES AND FOR DIFFERENT PURPOSES. THERE IS TO BE NO PEACE BETWEEN THE NEW CREATURE AND THE FLESH". Z'15-180.

CHURCH NOT TO AID THE WORLD

"The Church's Mission is not to help the world to improve its present conditions, nor to have anything to do with its affairs at present. Knowing that the purpose of God is to let the World fully test its own ability to govern itself, the true Church should not, while *in* it, be *of* the world. The Church of God should give its entire attention and effort to preaching the Kingdom. The Lord had no time for other matters; neither had the apostles, neither have any of the saints who follow their example." A-367.

"Let the world manage its own affairs in whatever way it thinks best." Z'18-253.

THE VOICE FROM BEHIND

"As John heard a voice behind him (not in front-new Light) and looked in that direction (behind him), so we now who have the realities find that the Message is behind us, and turn and look toward the past to see the fulfillment of the various features of the Divine Plan". Z'05-168. "THE WORDS OF INSPIRATION GIVE US TO UNDERSTAND THAT SATAN'S STRUGGLES TO RETAIN CONTROL OF MANKIND WILL BE ESPECIALLY DESPERATE AT ITS CLOSE." S.78

GREAT COMPANY TO BRING OUT NEW LIGHT

"The First Book of Life is called the Lamb's Book of Life, containing the names of the Elect Church. The entire Word of God will not be opened until after the Church is beyond the veil. Much of it, perhaps nearly all of it, will be opened by the Great Company class during the Time of Trouble, but some may wait for the Prophets themselves. Meantime all that is necessary for SALVATION and SERVICE has been provided." G-312.

CHRISTIANS NOT TO SUPPORT ERROR

"These Scriptural injunctions apply to everything we may do, or endeavor to do in the Lord's service. Those who have the money talent should not only use it 'with simplicity' - without ostentation - but they should use it with wisdom. It should not go to assist in preaching either slight errors or gross ones, if they knew it - neither by assisting in paying the expense of meetings nor in PAYING PUBLISHING EXPENSES, and each should know, directly or indirectly, what he is assisting to promulgate as truth. If you have read and failed to comprehend a publication, do not suppose your mind incapable of grasping anything deep and complex, and then proceed to circulate it among others; but conclude that if you have not the mental capacity to understand it, your safest plan will be not to run the risk of choking anyone else with it. "Whatever is not of faith is sin" applies to this as well as other matters."

"These criticisms APPLY TO WATCH TOWER PUBLICATIONS AS WELL AS OTHERS. PROVE BY GOD'S WORD ALL THAT YOU RECEIVE FROM THIS OFFICE. (1) See if it squares with the doctrine of the Ransom; if it does not you need go no further with the proving. (2) If it is in accord with that foundation of the Gospel proceed to examine it in the light of all the Scriptures. (3) If it stands these tests receive it and hold it fast, as being FROM GOD; and (4) circulate it wherever you can. (5) But if ever you get from us either tract or paper WHICH YOU DO NOT FIND IN HARMONY WITH THE SCRIPTURES surely let us know wherein it disagrees, and DO NOT CIRCULATE IT." Tower 1894-74.

(See last page "WARNING")

FALLING AWAY FROM STEADFASTNESS
(2 Pet.3:17)

"This exhortation applies to the Lord's consecrated people living at the present time. The proof of this is found in the context: The Apostle has just been portraying some of the events connected with the day of the Lord in which we are living - the "Day of Vengeance". In verse 10 he has pointed out that the present age will end with the dissolution of the symbolic 'heavens' and the symbolic 'earth' which, as we have elsewhere shown, signifies the utter disruption of the present social and ecclesiastical order. In verse thirteen he points out that we are looking for a new order of things, and not hoping either to patch up the old order ourselves, or that others will succeed in patching what the Lord has declared 'shall pass away'. And now in our text (2 Pet.3:17) he refers to 'these things'. In the eleventh verse he points out that those who have such expectations should be separate and distinct from all other people in the world, saying: 'What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?' And then in our text and in the verse preceding it, he points out that at this particular time the Adversary will take advantage of certain ones, will beguile them, get them to wrest the Scriptures and thus deceive themselves to their own destruction - to their loss of present light at least."

"Finding thus that the Apostle is particularly addressing ourselves, let us indeed give earnest heed to his counsel for we well know that we live in what the Apostle Paul calls that 'evil day' ". Eph.6:13.

"Beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked (unsettled) fall from your own steadfastness." Z'97-275.

YE CANNOT SERVE GOD AND MAMMON

"Even if we have difficulty in obtaining the necessities of life, we will be blessed in mind, in spirit, if we will deny ourselves, sacrificing something of earthly gratification, in order to render some thankoffering to the Lord."

"The great argument which the Adversary uses to enlist servants of Mammon, and to get the servants of God to serve both God and Mammon, is FEAR - fear of want - fear of distresses. In our lesson, therefore, the Lord takes up this feature first, urging his followers, not as Matt.6:34 would represent the matter, to be thoughtless, indifferent and careless in respect to our food and clothing, but to be without worry - not anxious and fearful and troubled about tomorrow and its affairs." Z'98-43.

KING HEZEKIAH'S COMPROMISE

"Spiritual Israelites may draw valuable lessons from this incident. We should beware how at any time we lose sight of the Lord's power on our behalf, no matter how threatening or great or dark the evil which assails us. A proper faith will look up to God, under such circumstances, and relying upon His promises will seek His aid, rather than seek to purchase deliverance from the great Adversary, Satan, by any COMPROMISE. But how many, on the contrary, are disposed to do as Hezekiah did, purchase peace with things consecrated to the Lord - to compromise the truth; for instance, if threatened with the disfavor of friends or neighbors or employers, how many are willing to conciliate such adversities by a more worldly course by subtracting from the time, influence, means, etc. consecrated to the Lord, considerable portions to be given to worldly service, or to secure domestic peace or social advancements or commercial prosperity. So surely as the Lord's consecrated people do this, we may expect that the Lord will permit to come upon them the very difficulties they dread and seek to avert by unholy compromise."

"They need just such a lesson, and as a father will give needed chastisements and corrections to his son, so the Lord deals with those who have been adopted into His family." Z'98-326.

WHOSE MOUTHPIECE
(Matt.16:21-28)

"On this occasion Peter made a serious mistake, for he attempted to turn teacher and got out of his place as pupil or disciple, when he attempted to reprove the Master and to instruct him, saying, 'This shall not be unto thee'.

"In his commendation of Peter's confession of him as the Christ, our Lord had intimated that it was not merely by his own wisdom that he had thus recognized and confessed, but that he had been under the guidance of the Father - 'Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father'. So in this case, our Lord intimated that Peter evidently had come under the control of a different spirit or influence-the influence of Satan; and since Peter had become the mouthpiece of error, of Satan, our Lord addressed him as tho he himself were Satan, 'Get thee behind me, Satan'. Our Lord recognized that the temptation put to him at the beginning of His ministry, and which He had resisted in the wilderness, was now again being thrust at him by the same great enemy of God who was seeking to use Peter as a channel of temptation, to hinder him from progressing in the way to sacrifice which the Father's Plan had marked out for him".

""What a lesson is here for everyone of us to the effect that we may be either mouthpieces of God and righteousness, or error and Satan. If they seek to turn us aside from the narrow path which our Lord marked out, they are not our true friends but most seductive enemies."

"Our Lord lost no opportunity of enforcing the lesson which He had started and which Peter attempted to interrupt. He proceeded to show the disciples that not only he, their Master, must suffer, but that all who desired to be His disciples and to set with Him on His throne and share the honors of His Kingdom must like-wise expect to suffer. Each must 'deny himself' and 'take up his cross' and follow the Captain of their Salvation. He enforces this by laying it down as a general principle, that the disposition to preserve the present life and its comforts at any cost is the disposition which will be deprived of eternal life; while the reverse disposition that is willing to lay down the present life in the service of the Lord, His Truth and His people, is the one which God will be pleased to grant life eternal." Z'98-109.

WORLDLY WORK

"Only the few who are spiritually minded (the true church) in and out of the sects can so much as see that moral and political reform is a worldly work and not the commission of the Church which is annointed to preach, not such reforms, but the cross of Christ and complete regeneration of heart."

"Those who are looking for a UNION in Christendom in which denominational names and denominational lines will be obliterated are looking for what they will never see until the great collapse comes, and the entire 'Christendom' system, social, religious, political and financial, goes down in the great anarchous trouble with which the present age will close. The UNION which will be cemented will be largely one of common sentiment and co-operation in moral and political reforms. And this federative union as already pointed out, began in 1846 in the organization of the Evangelical Alliance. We are looking yearly for its final knot to be tied in some manner that will include with other Protestant denominations, the Episcopal Church and a working agreement with Papacy. Thus the 'Image of the Beast' (Rev.13) will receive life - vigor, energy - be made active. And that activity which will seem to promise great things for Babylon and which will actively suppress liberty and be exerted powerfully against the spread of the truths now published by us, will be but the lifting up of the great mill stone preparatory to its being violently and quickly destroyed for it will soon be evident that such a new union of Church and State (wholly different from that of the past) will be a union of the classes against the masses; and it will be the rising of the masses in revolution that will, as God's agency, hurl the Babylon system to utter destruction."

"Indeed we expect that each year will now note rapid spread of the truth UNTIL the 'door is shut' - until the work is interferred with forcibly by outside influences. Then we shall understand that our work is done - that the 'Elect' have all been sealed and that naught remains but to "STAND" and ASSIST OTHERS TO STAND. Indeed this, as we all know, is a most important part of the present, for while others are being reached with the Truth, those already blessed are being assaulted by the Adversary so that all may be tested and only the faithful be ABLE TO STAND." See Eph.6:10-18.

"To quite a number of the Lord's brethren the adversary has presented this same temptation in this form: 'If you follow too closely to the Truth and permit the Holy Spirit of the truth to make you very zealous in its service, you will soon have no bread nor food for the world's people with whom you must deal do not appreciate such things. They will discharge you from their employ, or they will cease to deal at your store, or they will dismiss you from being their pastor or they will withdraw from you their fellowship, their society, etc. and you will starve for all the good things of this present life. The proper answer is that God is able to take care of all those who respect His spiritual blessings too much to sell them for a mess of pottage, as did Esau in the type; and that we are convinced that whoever lives according to the Word of God, tho he may lose some of the comforts of the present time, will eventually gain the far better, the life eternal with exceeding glory."

"God hath not given US the spirit of fear." 2 Tim.1:7; Z'00-4.

OBLIGATIONS OF A CHRISTIAN

"In Scripture Studies, Vol.VI, we have set forth a suggestion that the followers of Christ seek every proper means to avoid participation in war. We there suggested the possibility, but that in the event of conscription the Lord's followers should use their influence toward obtaining positions in the Hospital Corps or in the Provision Department of the Army, rather than in the actual warfare. We suggested further that if it were impossible to avoid going into the trenches, it would still not be necessary to violate the Divine requirement - 'Thou shalt do no murder'. We have been wondering since if the course we have suggested is the best one. We wonder if such a course would not mean COMPROMISE. We reflect that to become a member of the army and to put on the military uniform implies the duties and obligations of a soldier as recognized and accepted. A protest made to an officer would be insignificant - the public in general would not know of it. Would not the Christian be really out of his place under such conditions? 'But', some one replies, 'if one were to refuse the uniform and the military service, he would be shot' We reply that if the presentation were properly made there might be some kind of exoneration, but if not, would it be any worse to be shot because of loyalty to the Prince of Peace and refusal to disobey His order than to be shot while under the banner of these earthly kings and apparently giving them support and, in appearance at least, compromising the teachings of our Heavenly King? Of the two deaths we would prefer the former - prefer to die because of faithfulness to our Heavenly King. Certainly the one dying for his loyalty to the PRINCIPLES of the Lord's teachings would accomplish far more by his death than would the one dying in the trenches. We cannot tell how great the influence would be for peace, for righteousness, for God, if a hundred of the Lord's faithful were to follow the course of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and refuse to bow to the God of War. Like those noble men they might say, 'our God is able to deliver us, if He chooses so to do, but if He does not choose to deliver us, that will not alter our course. We will serve Him and follow His direction, come what may'. Z'15-260.

WORKS OF DARKNESS

What is the force of the Apostle's argument to those who see as he did the approaching Kingdom of light that shall banish all the darkness of sin, ignorance, superstition, etc? It is expressed in his words, 'Let us, therefore, cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armour of light'. The works of darkness would be any works whatsoever that would not stand approval in the light of the new dispensation, if it were already fully ushered in. Let us remember that we belong to the new dispensation and not to the old, and should therefore, live in accordance with our citizenship and our responsibilities toward the Prince of Light and in opposition to the Prince of Darkness, his works and his ways." Z'03-122.

PASTOR RUSSELL'S FORECAST OF PRESENT CONDITIONS

"As a result of these conditions we may expect an increasing disregard of the rights and constitutional prerogatives of all who are not directly active supporters of the powers that be, political, financial and religious. The freedom of speech and freedom to circulate literature will be greatly abridged, under the plea that such abridgment is necessary for the public welfare, which in some respects will be the truth. Anything not fully in line with the rulers of that time will be reckoned as in opposition; and notwithstanding our disposition for peace, and our good will toward men of all classes and stations, the Watch Tower publications will probably come under the ban with those of Socialism - tho their teachings be as opposite as the poles. The period following will seemingly be the time when the door will be closing - and opportunities for service will be increasingly diminished tho opportunities for suffering for the Truth's sake may increase." Z'04-199.

SURRENDER

When the attitude of the Civil and Military authorities threatened to close the Bible House, its officers surrendered and used your consecrated gifts to purchase Bonds, and thus avoid persecution; and thereby contributed to the welfare of the existing order condemned by God to destruction.

This was contrary to all instructions of the Word and "That Servant", and even as our Pastor pointed out, failed to purchase the immunity for which they paid so great a price and are having so much difficulty in explaining away.

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Up to Passover,1918 we were looking FOR things.
Now we are looking AT them.

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WARNING

Were we to quote the Scriptural phrase, "Ye shall not surely die", separate and apart from the context, its proper setting, it would mean the exact reverse of all Scripture teachings.

Therefore, should we, or anyone else, quote you a paragraph from "The Towers" or "Studies in the Scriptures" apart from the proper setting in the Tower article or chapter of the Volume, it may easily be interpreted, standing thus alone, to mean the exact reverse, at least very differently, from that which was intended when written.

"Take heed that no man deceive you". - Matt.24:4

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STAND FAST BIBLE STUDENTS CONVENTIONS.

It has been the glorious privilege of Stand Fast Bible Students of the Pacific Northwest to have had the advantage of attendance upon four of the most remarkable and inspiring Conventions of their whole Christian experience.

These were held at Portland, Oregon, November 28th-December 1st, 1918, where this movement originated; Bellingham, Washington, December 14th-16th, 1918; Vancouver,B.C. December 29th-January 1st, 1919; and Seattle, Washington, January 10th-13th, 1919.

At each of these, several remarkable addresses have been delivered which we would that every one now standing might have heard, making practical applications as they did of "the things which we have learned and been assured of" (2 Tim.3:14) to the peculiarly trying times through which the "sealed" ones are now passing. We expect to have these printed and mailed to you from time to time, separate from "OLD CORN GEMS" issues.

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PLEASE NOTE: This issue of "OLD CORN GEMS" (No.2) is necessarily the last one to be sent to any who have not advised us that they wish a continuance of them.

STAND FAST PRINCIPLES.

The Great Master warned that, straight is the gate and narrow the way that leads unto life and that few would ever find it; and experience shows that fewer are disposed to walk therein after they do find it, for it is too narrow -- it is the way of self-denial and SELF SACRIFICE. It is the way our Lord walked in lonliness; and we are called to walk in His footsteps. No one can "STAND FAST" without so doing.

PRINCIPLE is defined as a "fixed rule of action". "STAND FAST BIBLE STUDENTS" therefore are "firm, unmovable, knowing that their toil is not unfruitful in the Lord". These prayerfully and conscientiously observe the Principles laid down by our Lord and confirmed by His Apostles. Their teachings form the "rule of action" of their daily lives. From these they steadfastly refuse to turn, come what may, ever bearing in mind that ONE is their Master and Him they would obey, whatever the cost. They know no other Master and use only the Liberty that comes from Him, their Head. Observance of such Principles of necessity leads to carefulness of conduct and to examination of motives, which are the mainspring of actions.

Therefore the teachings of the Lord and His Apostles, the CHANNEL of all Divine Truth, become their inspiration, their comfort and the source of their strength and consolation. Likewise all those of the "NARROW WAY" are careful to note and follow the precepts and practices of "THAT FAITHFUL SERVANT". Upon these they place consistent construction, and from the same they will not deflect; though others waver, they will not, they Stand Fast, but never use their liberty for a cloak.

Knowing their God, "Stand Fast Bible Students" consequently honor their Head by hearty obedience to His commandments. They would lift the "Royal Banner" high that the poor world, through their lives, their courage and their loyalty, MIGHT SEE their Lord and Saviour.

The Principles for which these are so resolutely standing, are those set forth in the Scriptures, and so fearlessly, vigorously and uniformly advocated by "That Faithful Servant", and until the summer of 1918 were held to by all the adherents of the I.B.S.A., which has become now but a name for another Babylonish Sect.

Hence "STAND FAST BIBLE STUDENTS" are different.

OLD CORN GEMS

"Stand Fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, ..."

SEMI-MONTHLY
February 15, 1919

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STAND FAST

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. 5:21

In view of the fact that new and strange thoughts about the Elijah and Elisha types are now being promulgated by those who hold the "broader view," it may be well to study carefully what "that wise and faithful servant" taught us on this matter. The following articles are gleaned from Brother Russell's works; much more our Pastor wrote on this subject but his thoughts were always in harmony with those herein contained.

We would particularly call the reader's attention to the scriptural proofs Brother Russell brings to support his assertion that Elijah types the Christ in the Flesh (Jesus the head and the Church His body). Let us BE WARNED THEREFORE NOT TO HEED the claims that a few individuals are now making, that they alone, are the antitypical Elijah because those that now look for individuals "to fulfill Malachi's predictions (on this subject) will 'know not the time of their visitation' until the great day of trouble is burning AS AN OVEN." B. 254.—The Great Company Class.

The last experiences of Elijah before being taken up, were as follows: First, he went with Elisha to Jordan. There he smote and divided the waters with his wrapped up Mantle, afterwards he went on in Elisha's company until the Chariot of fire appeared and separated them, then the whirlwind came and took Elijah up.

We believe that the wrapped up Mantle represents Volume 7, which certainly was hurled amongst the people dividing them into two great classes, those favoring the truth and those bitterly opposed to it.

The separation of Elijah and Elisha by the fiery chariot would come next. It is believed, that that is even now taking place; fiery trials have come upon the Truth people making a division, one class (The Elijah) hold to that which they have learned, while the other class (The Elisha) are turning to new and strange thoughts and interpretations of the Scriptures.

SOON the antitype of Elijah's going up in a whirlwind will take place, when the last members of the Little Flock will be glorified.

Afterwards Elisha (the Great Company) will return alone with the Mantle of Elijah (Volume 7) and do a great work amidst unparalleled difficulties and persecution.

Let us watch and pray that we may be found worthy to be taken with others of the Elijah class when the whilwind makes its appearance.

AN APOLOGY AND AN EXPLANATION

Immediately after the mailing of "Old Corn Gems" No. 2, the "Tower" of February 1st arrived, denying that the Society had purchased Bonds.

We therefore apologized to the Society for our part in further spreading this report, it being our purpose to proclaim the glorious things that culminated at Passover, 1918, and their natural and inevitable effect upon Consecrated followers of our Lord, and not by any means to be unjust to any.

We claim the following in justification:

First, the Society's belated denial—it seeming inconceivable that, if the report could be denied, official denial had not come forth months ago.

Second, Chairman Barber's statement at the Seattle Convention last fall that, "had we not bought bonds the Government would have closed the Bible House," and his failure to press the point that it was not the Society who purchased.

In using the pronoun **"we"** he could not have referred to himself, as the one then speaking, for he had not been accused of any such purchase; nor could he have referred to the officers and thus classed himself with them, as he was not an officer at the time of the trouble; what conclusion, then, could be reached but that he referred to the Society which he then did represent as its visible head?

Third, in the above statement we have a tacit confession that bonds were bought to protect the Society from persecution; and if this was done by individuals, we find the Society, in the "Tower" of May 15, 1918, page 152, making the policy of those individuals the policy of the Society, and advising Bible Students that it is their duty to do the same; and it is difficult to see that for the Society to become the purchaser is more reprehensible than for it to advise others to thus use consecrated funds.

Fourth, Bonds having been bought to save the Bible House and the Society having accepted the immunity thus purchased, it is a well established principle in law that it thus became equally guilty with the purchasers.

Nevertheless, it is for each one to be "persuaded in his own mind" as to whether the acts referred to are worthy of his approval or disapproval, and while we cannot give them our approval, we ask that none be prejudiced against the Society by reason of our statement in "Gems" No. 2.

Was not this trouble at the Bible House, a test permitted of the Lord upon its officers to prove if they would stand like the Hebrews on the Plains of Dura and say,—"Well, if the Lord will not permit the Bible House to remain open except we compromise with the present evil order, and have part in carnal warfare, then the Bible House may close, and when closed for this reason we shall regard its work as finished."

SUGGESTIONS

The following are merely suggestions, and are made in reply to many inquiries received on these subjects, but "Let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind."

It is recognized that the second clause in the "VOW" is no longer applicable, as the Harvest, and consequently the work of the harvest, ended at Passover 1918. The following is therefore suggested.

Daily will I remember at the Throne of Heavenly Grace the general interests of the saints everywhere, and particularly the activities incident to their upbuilding and the privilege I may have in sharing therein.

A close study of the following subjects are considered helpful and opportune at this time:

The Foes and Besetments of the New Creation, Study 15, *Volume* 6.

The Work of the Harvest and the Deliverance and Exaltation of the Church. Studies 6 *and* 7, *Volume* 3.

All of Volume 7.

"Stand Fast,"	**1 Thess.**	**3:8**
"Hold Fast,"	**1 Thess.**	**5:21**
"Stand Fast,"	**2 Thess.**	**2:15**
"Hold Fast,"	**2 Tim.**	**1:13**
"Stand Fast,"	**Phil.**	**1:27**
"Hold Fast,"	**Heb.**	**3:6**
"Stand Fast,"	**Gal.**	**5:1**
"Hold Fast,"	**Heb.**	**4:14**
"Stand Fast,"	**1 Cor.**	**16:13**
"Hold Fast,"	**Heb.**	**10:23**
"Stand Fast,"	**Jer.**	**46:14**
"Hold Fast,"	**Rev.**	**3:3**
"Stand Fast,"	**Psa.**	**111:8**
"Hold Fast,"	**Rev.**	**3:3-11**
"STAND"	**Eph.**	**6:13**

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER THREE

"They did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover—and the manna ceased—neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit (OLD CORN) of the land of Canaan (during) that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH *TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL.* Z. '18:51.

What Brother Russell Said About

ELIJAH AND ELISHA

ELIAS SHALL FIRST COME

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest (i. e. or else) I come and smite the earth with a curse." *Mal.* 4:5-6.

In considering the evidences of the time being at hand for the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom in the earth, this prophecy, showing the priority of Elijah's coming, must not be overlooked.

The expression of our text is peculiar. The thought seems to be that Elijah's work will be to *turn* (i. e. convert) parents to a humble, childlike condition, and, after making them teachable as little children, to turn their hearts from error, sin and unfaithfulness, and lead them back into harmony with their "fathers"—a name given by Hebrews to their *faithful* patriarchs and prophets.

Malachi's prophecy, the last message sent by Jehovah to Israel, seems to have deeply impressed them—especially the last two chapters, which particularly refer to Messiah's coming, and to the special trials which the day of the Lord's presence would bring with it. (See Mal. 3:1-3, 3-18; 4:1-6). Gathering from this that the testing would be peculiar, they took comfort from the last verses quoted above, which promised that Elijah the prophet, who had once converted the entire nation from the worship of Baal back to the worship of God, would come again to prepare them, before this severe testing time which Messiah's coming would bring.

This prophecy was not *fulfilled* at the first advent of our Lord—neither the portion which relates to Messiah nor that which refers to Elijah. The reference of the prophecy is evidently to the second advent; to the coming of the "Messenger of the Covenant" in glory and power; and to the testing and great trouble of the day of the Lord at that time. However, Christ's presentation to typical Israel, and the great trouble which came upon them as a nation when they rejected him, was, as God had foreseen and intended, another shadow which further illustrated in many particulars the things presented in this prophecy. John the Immerser, in the spirit of Elijah, did a work for Israel similar to that of the Elijah promised, but failed of success: and, as a result, trouble (a curse) upon that nation followed. The real Elijah referred to by the prophet was to do a great work for the whole "earth," to prepare all mankind for the second advent: and he will for a time also fail of success, and as a result the great time of trouble (the curse) will smite the whole earth.

At the first advent, as we have just seen, many of God's promises and plans were carried out on a small scale with one nation, Israel, as an illustration of the greater, grander realities to be accomplished at Christ's second coming. And as the miracles, cures, etc., represented the greater works of the Millennial age, and our Lord's riding on the ass as King represented his assuming the greater power, majesty and honor at the second advent as King of kings and Lord of lords, so "the *man* Christ Jesus" and his little band of disciples represented the Lord of Glory highly exalted, associated with the saints, his bride and co-heirs, at the second advent. And *thus* John the Baptist and his disciples engaged in the same work with and under him, in attempting to convert Israel and to prepare them to receive Messiah, *represented the real Elijah* (the true Christian church), whose work has been to *attempt* the conversion of the world before the coming of Messiah to the world—the spiritual Lord of glory and King of kings. John the Immerser, in the spirit and power of Elijah, failed to reform Israel, and, as a consequence (Matt. 27:12), Israel rejected Jesus in the flesh, and brought upon themselves a great *"day of vengeance,"* trouble and wrath. (Luke 21:22). So, likewise, only on the larger scale, the *real and greater Elijah* has failed to convert and prepare the world to receive the King of Glory, and now, consequently, the great day of wrath must come upon the world, to melt and mellow and humble and prepare all to cry out from the heart—Hosannah! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of Jehovah!

It is thus seen that the *Church in the flesh* (the Christ in the flesh, Head and body) is the Elijah or forerunner of the *Church in glory*, Jehovah's Anointed. Neither the nominal church (NOR ANY INDIVIDUAL) but the really consecrated Church, which on the other side of the tomb will be the great Anointed Deliverer,—THESE CONSTITUTE THE ELIJAH. Their mission is to reprove error and sin, and to point to the coming Kingdom of glory. Our Lord Jesus and the Apostles, and all the faithful in Christ Jesus since, are of this great antitypical Elijah, prophet or teacher—the same class (Head and body) which shall shortly compose the King of Glory. The work in which the Church is now engaged is merely preliminary to its future work, so far as the reforming of the world is concerned. In its kingly office the Church shall accomplish for the world what it fails to do as the Elijah teacher. John the Baptist was not actually Elijah returned to earth, neither is the Church; but as it was true of John, that he did an Elijah work to Israel (Luke 1:17) to prepare them, and *introduced the Lord in the flesh, so it is true of the Church*—it does the predicted Elijah work "in the spirit and power of Elijah" to the world, and announces our Lord's second advent in almost the same words which John used at the first advent: "There standeth one among you whom ye know not.—He it is who, coming after me, is superior to me." John 1:26, 27.

All could not receive John's testimony nor realize that he was forerunner to the King in the flesh. Had they done so, they would have been prepared thereby to receive Jesus as their Messiah. To as many of them as could and did accept John's message and receive Christ, to these John *did do* the Elijah work. As our Lord said to them of John (Matt. 11:14), "If ye will *receive it,* this is the Elias which was to come;" though John and his work did not complete the prediction concerning Elijah, even as our Lord in the *flesh* did not fulfill all that was predicted of Messiah. He was, to all who would receive it, Jehovah's Anointed, even before he had finished his work of sacrifice, or had been glorified, or had come again in the exercise of the great office of Messiah or Deliverer. John, at the first advent, was really a finishing out, in a measure, of the type begun in the person and work of Elijah; and John's work at the first advent foreshadowed the closing work of the Church at the second advent. These, the feet of Christ in the flesh—the feet of Elijah, announce the Kingdom (Isa. 52:7). To those who *"can* receive it" we announce, as at hand, the reign of the Christ glorified; and likewise *to those who "can receive it"* we have pointed out the foretold antitypical Elijah. Some, probably, *will not "receive it," but* WILL STILL LOOK FOR SOME ONE MAN TO FULFILL MALACHI'S PREDICTIONS, and will "know not the time of their visitation" until the great day of trouble is burning as an oven.

In view of the class which Elijah represented, how forcibly eloquent was that *"vision" which the Lord showed to the three disciples* on the mount of transfiguration. (Matt. 17:1-9). It was a vision of the coming Kingdom, Peter tells us. (2 Pet. 1:16-18). Our Lord, transfigured, appeared radiant before their eyes, while a figure of Moses represented the Mosaic or Law Dispensation and a figure of Elijah represented the Gospel or Christian Dispensation. *Both dispensations* look toward and point out and speak of the sacrifice and sufferings of Christ and the glory to follow.

Before leaving this subject we will point out some features and incidents in the life of the Prophet Elijah, the type, comparing them with the history of the Church, the antitypical Elijah, which will certainly astonish all who have noticed them heretofore. That the comparison may be readily seen, we will place these in parallel columns.

ELIJAH.	THE CHURCH.
Elijah was persecuted for fidelity to truth and righteousness.	The Church was persecuted for fidelity to truth and righteousness.
His principal persecutor was Jezebel, the wicked queen of Israel, who is mentioned by name as the type of the enemy of the saints.—Rev. 2:20.	The principal persecutor was the apostate Church of Rome, *which* claims to be a "queen" and ruler over spiritual Israel.—Rev. 18:7.
Jezebel's persecuting power was exercised through her husband, Ahab, the king.	Papacy's persecuting power was exercised through the Roman Empire, to which she was joined.
Elijah fled from Jezebel and Ahab, into the wilderness, to a place prepared of God, where he was miraculously nourished.—1 Kings 17:5-9.	The true Church fled into the symbolic wilderness—or condition of isolation—to her place prepared of God, where she was sustained.—Rev. 12:6, 16.
Elijah was "three years and six months" in the wilderness, and during that time there was no rain, and a great famine was in the land.—James 5:17; 1 Kings 17:7; 18:2.	The Church was three and a half symbolic years (a day for a year—1,260 literal years) in the wilderness conditions, during which there was a spiritual famine because of the lack of truth, the living water.—Comp. Rev.12:6, 11:3; Amos 8:11.
After the three and a half years, 1,260 days, when Elijah returned *from the wilderness,* the errors of Jezebel's priests were manifested, the true God was honored, and copious rains followed.—1 Kings 18:41-45.	At the end of the 1,260 years the power of the truth and its witnesses was manifested (A. D. 1799); and since then the truth has flowed at the rate of millions of Bibles every year, refreshing the world and bringing forth fruit.
The king and the people at first rejoiced, and Elijah and his God were honored but the spirit of Jezebel was unchanged. She still sought the life of Elijah, and he was again compelled to flee into the wilderness.—1 Kings 18:40, 45, 46; 19:1-4.	The Bible has brought such blessings that the empires of earth recognize the Lord's hand yet the *principles* of Papacy—Jezebel—in so-called Protestant sects compel the saints again to flee into the wilderness condition.
Elijah's career ended by his being taken from the earth.	The saints will be changed from earthly to heavenly conditions.

These are striking coincidences, and are not accidental, but beyond this, there are in this type suggestions, supported by other scriptures, designed to guide and to prepare the saints to act well their part, and to strengthen and sustain them in the stormy day just upon us.

Elijah was separated from earthly scenes by a chariot of fire, representative of the spiritual glory and exaltation awaiting, at the end of the earthly race-course, those of the Church alive and remaining to the last days. But we should also remember that it was by a whirlwind or storm that he was taken away; and a storm is the symbol of trouble, as much as the fiery chariot is a figure of victory and glorious escape from that trouble.

A depth of significance is found in the meaning of the name Elijah. It signifies *God* (mighty one) *of Jehovah.* It is thus a fitting name for the Lord's Anointed, whose grand work will be to restore all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.

Concluding this subject, we notice briefly the fact that in the close of the Prophet Elijah's career he called Elisha, who, after sacrificing, left all and followed with Elijah, and became his successor as prophet when Elijah was taken away in the whirlwind—receiving his mantle of authority and a large degree of his spirit and power. (1 Kings 19:16). And since Elijah represented the Body of Christ in the flesh—the overcoming Church, a company, a number—it is but reasonable that we should conclude that Elisha represented a class also; a class which will come into deep sympathy with the Elijah class, and follow the Lord's leading with it; and yet a class which will not be expecting to be glorified. These will be separated, by the "whirlwind" of trouble, from the Elijah class, yet nevertheless will retain an interest and will receive a blessing. After Elijah was gone, Elisha became bold and powerful, so that the theologians of that day *("sons of the prophets") said, The spirit of Elijah rests upon Elisha now!*

The meaning of the name *Elisha* is *mighty deliverer,* and the career of Elisha was one of restitution work. This doubtless foreshadows a work by a class which in the future will be the active agents among men in carrying on the restitution work in the power *of the then glorified Church.* B. 249-257, 260, 265, 266.

"UNDER HIS WINGS."

In God I have found a retreat,
Where I can securely abide;
No refuge, no rest so complete,
And here I intend to reside.

I dread not the terror by night;
No arrow can harm me by day;
His shadow has covered me quite,
My fears he has driven away.

The pestilence walking about,
When darkness has settled abroad,
Can never compel me to doubt
The presence and power of our Lord.

The wasting destruction at noon,
No fearful foreboding can bring;
With Jesus my soul doth commune,
His perfect salvation I sing.

A thousand may fall at my side,
Ten thousand at my right hand;
Above me his wings are spread wide,
Beneath them in safety I stand.

HIS TRUTH IS MY BUCKLER AND SHIELD,
HIS LOVE HE HATH SET UPON ME;
HIS NAME IN MY HEART HE HATH SEALED;
E'EN NOW HIS SALVATION I SEE.

ELIJAH'S FIERY CHARIOT

"In Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore."—Psalm 16:11.

Since Bible students have recognized that Elijah's life was a prophecy—that he typed, or represented, THE ENTIRE CHURCH in his earthly experiences—his history has become the more interesting and the more intelligible. He was a faithful servant of God; but his greatest prophecy, that of his life, was not understood, even though the Lord declared, subsequently, "I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord." (Malachi 4:5). This antitypical Elijah, beginning with Jesus in the flesh, has been coming and giving his message to the world for now more than eighteen centuries. We believe that the taking away of Elijah in the chariot of fire, narrated in today's lesson, is about to be fulfilled as respects the Church of Christ in the flesh. Soon they shall be no more in the flesh; for the Lord will take them, will glorify them with Himself. As the Apostle explains, they will meet the Lord in the air, in the realm of spiritual control of the earth—in Kingdom power and great glory. 1 Thessalonians 4:17.

Elisha had the opportunity of becoming Elijah's successor, and appears to have been guided by a proper spirit of zeal in his desire to accompany Elijah and to serve him. When Elijah was taken in the fiery chariot, his mantle bequeathed to Elisha represented that the latter had become Elijah's successor, to receive a special blessing of the Elijah spirit. While we are CERTAIN that Elijah typed the Church of God in the flesh, we may not be quite so positive that Elisha was also a type and represented a secondary class of God's people, referred to in the Bible sometimes as the "foolish virgin" class, sometimes as the servants of the Bride class who will follow her, sometimes as a Great Company whose number no man knows, who will come through great tribulation and attain a place before the Throne, *failing to attain with the Elijah class a place in the Throne as joint-heirs of Christ. Matt.* 25:13; *Psalm* 45:14, 15; *Revelation* 7:9-17.

The sons of the prophets may also be types. If so, they would seem to represent a third class, acquainted with Elijah and Elisha, yet not particularly associated with them. The fact that the sons of the prophets discussed with Elisha the going of Elijah does not *necessarily signify that they believed the matter.* They knew that *Elijah expected to go,* but their own doubts on the subject are intimated by the fact that they subsequently made a search of the land to see if Elijah had not really fallen somewhere, dropped by the whirlwind. Their search and final conviction represent that for some time certain classes of Christian people may doubt that the Church has really gone to glory, but that afterwards they are thoroughly convinced. Possibly the three days' search may be symbolic, representing three years.

GILGAL, BETHEL, JERICHO, JORDAN.

Elisha knew of Elijah's expectation of translation; and, with that in view, they had travelled to Gilgal. But the Lord did not take Elijah there, but sent him on to Bethel. Elijah's suggestion that Elisha should tarry at Gilgal implied that Elisha was discouraged and had lost faith in the journey. But no! he went on. The same thing occurred at Bethel, and they went on to Jericho. The same thing occurred at Jericho, and they went on to Jordan. Crossing the Jordan they still went on, but thereafter with no definite place in view. However, from the time they came to Jordan a multitude of the sons of the prophets, deeply interested, watched them.

Let us apply these matter antitypically to the Church. Gilgal would seem to represent the beginning of the Harvest time—October, 1874. That date, prominently marked in the Bible (Daniel 12:12) was looked forward to by many Bible students with deep interest as the possible time when the Church would be completed—although nothing in the Bible so declares. The inference was clearly deducible, but there was no positive statement as to the Church's change being accomplished then. Some measure of disappointment was felt when expectations were not realized. Nevertheless, the Elijah class started to the next point, accompanied by so many others as were worthy of being accounted of the antitypical Elisha class.

The experiences at Bethel were very similar. The Spring of 1878 corresponded to Bethel. It was clearly seen to be the time parallel to the Lord's assuming His kingly office in the end of the Jewish Age and saying to the Jewish nation, "Your house is left unto you desolate." (Luke 13:34, 35). It was not unreasonable to think of that Scripturally-marked date as the time for the Church's glorification, although the Lord did not directly promise this. Nevertheless, a blessing came to all those who received their disappointment in a proper spirit.

On they went to the next date, which corresponded to Jericho; namely 1881. Considerable interest attached to that date on the part of many Bible students because it was the parallel date to the time when the door was thrown open to the Gentiles, and Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, was received into the family of God. We assumed that this might mean a change of dispensation here, and that the glorification of the Church was typed. We were mistaken in that supposition, but received great blessing and went on.

The next point of time Scripturally marked was October, 1914—the close of the Times of the Gentiles, corresponding to Jordan. Many Bible Students are thoroughly convinced that the 2520 years from Zedekiah's day to October, 1914, ended there—that that date marked the end of God's lease of world power to the Gentile nations. They are convinced that the present war is the result, and that its ultimate conclusion will be the complete overthrow of all the kingdoms of the world and the full establishment of Messiah's Kingdom in the control of earth.

The Lord did not say that the Church would be glorified before the conclusion of the Gentile Times; yet such a thought was not an unreasonable one, in view of many Scriptures. Z. '15:285, 286.

TYPICAL EXPERIENCES OF ELIJAH AND ELISHA

Before we leave the dear friends here to go to another city, some of you will wish to say "Brother Russell, we may not see you again for quite a while; and we wish you would say something about the hopes of the Church for the near future. Do you think that the Church will be changed soon?" We answer, We do not know. We admit that there are many things that we do not know. If we knew all about the Book of Revelation, we would get out the Seventh Volume very soon. There are a few things of which we are not just sure. We do not like to do any guesswork. We could guess about some things, but we do not allow ourself to guess. *"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God."* 1 Pet. 4:11.

"But, Brother Russell, what is your thought as to the time of our change? Were you not disappointed that it did not come when we hoped that it would?" you would ask. No, we reply, we were not disappointed. Two years before that time we pointed out in The Watch Tower that we did not think the change would come October, 1914. But, Brethern, those of us who are in the right attitude toward God are not disappointed at any of His arrangements. We did not wish our own will to be done; so when we found out that we were *expecting the wrong thing in October, 1914, then we were glad* that the Lord did not change His Plain to suit us. We did not wish Him to do so. We merely wish to be able to apprehend His plans and purposes.

"What do you think of things now?" you ask. "What would you think are the present indications?" To this we say, we have already mentioned in The Watch Tower and in talks given to the friends what is our thought as to the type of Elijah and Elisha in the close of the earthly career of the Prophet Elijah. We will briefly refer to it again here, and perhaps might add a word further. We recognize that the Church of God is the antitype of Elijah because she is, with her great Head, The Christ of God. *It is The Christ in the flesh that antitypes the Prophet Elijah.* His experiences during his career as God's Prophet typified the experiences of The Christ class during all the more than eighteen hundred years of their earthly career. His closing experiences would parallel, we understand the Scriptures to teach, the closing experiences of the last members of the Christ Body in the flesh.

PASSING OF LAST CHRONOLOGICAL POINT A TEST.

We remember that when the Lord would take up Elijah into the heavens He brought certain things to pass that would make a parallel to the taking away of the last members of Christ. We believe that this is a reasonable inference. We have seen how the Lord, upon the day that Elijah was to be taken away, sent him to four successive places—Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho, and Jordan. At each of these different places Elijah evidently thought that the Lord would take him. And so it has been with us. During this Harvest of the Age the Lord, through His Word, has seemed to send His people to four different points of time,—1874, 1878, 1881, and 1914. At each of these points of time the watching saints who realized that the end of the Age was upon the Church have thought that the "change" might come. They watched for it. When they came to each of these points, the Lord said, "Go to another place." Finally we reached the last place of the four—October 1st, 1914. This was the last point of time that Bible chronology pointed out to us as relating to the Church's experiences. Did the Lord tell us that we would be taken there? No. What did He say? His Word and the fulfilments of prophecy seemed to point unmistakably that this date marked the end of the Gentile Times. We *inferred* from this that the Church's "change" would take place on or before that date. But God did not *tell us* that it would be so. He permitted us to draw that inference; and we believe that it has proven to be a necessary test upon God's dear saints everywhere.

WHAT SMITING OF THE WATERS MAY MEAN.

Did the Times of the Gentiles end by October 1st, 1914? It certainly looks very much as if they did. The great nations of the world there began to go to pieces under the terrible shaking process then begun. The shaking is still going on, day by day, week by week, and will continue until the work of destruction is complete. Do we see anything definite as yet as to when we are to finish our earthly course? We do not see anything positive thus far. If any of you find out anything, we wish you would tell us.

What do we expect? We expect just what the picture points out. Of late we have been thinking considerably of what took place when Elijah and Elisha came to the river Jordan. They stopped there and stood talking. Something must be done before they could go further. So the Lord's people have been standing for a time since we came to October, 1914. Then Elijah took his mantle, wrapped it together and smote the waters of Jordan. The waters divided to right and left, and the Prophets went over dry shod. After they had crossed, they went on, talking together. They had received no further instructions from the Lord. They simply walked on. Suddenly the chariot of fire appeared and separated them, and Elijah was taken away in the chariot by a whirlwind.

CHARIOT OF FIRE TO MAKE SEPARATION.

What does this signify in antitype? We think that it signifies a division between the Little Flock and the Great Company. We are to be careful not to form a judgment as to who are to be of the Great Company, however. Some say to us, "What do you think of such a brother?" We are not to judge one another. It is not for us to say that such a one belongs to the Great Company class. We are to consider all the friends as one people. Only the Lord knows who are His wholly faithful ones, and *He is leaving the matter to be manifested at the end of the earthly career of the Little Flock. The Lord Himself will do the dividing.*

When the Lord's time comes for separating His Little Flock class, He will make no mistake. It will be the Little Flock that will go in the chariot, and no others. Let us, therefore, keep *ourselves* in the love of God. Never mind what any one else thinks. Of course we are to love and serve the brethren; but even when we do our best, some of the brethren may misunderstand us. But trust it all in the Lord's hands. He will take care of the entire matter. Do not decide about anybody else; but let each of us *watch himself,* and see to it that he keep his heart in the right attitude toward the Lord and the brethren. St. Paul says, "Judge nothing before the time." (1 Corinthians 4:5). All will soon be manifested. We shall see the Elijah class taken away in the chariot; the others will not be taken. Then we shall see the radical division. WE SHALL KNOW ALL ABOUT IT THEN. THE LORD WILL ATTEND TO IT.

THE "CHARIOT," THE "FIRE" AND THE "WHIRLWIND."

Now, as to the meaning of the fire and the chariot: Fire always represents destruction, and a chariot of fire would seem to signify some very trying experience that will separate the Elijah class from the Elisha class, and bring the deliverance of the Elijah class.

"Brother Russell, are you not afraid of alarming us?" some may ask. No! We are all very desirous of getting into the Lord's Chariot, surely. It is the best thing in all the world. "But it means trouble!" Well, we desire trouble, if this trouble will be our chariot to take us Home. We are waiting for it day by day. When Elijah's chariot came, it was in a whirlwind that he was carried into the heavens, into the atmosphere beyond earthly vision. What did the whirlwind signify as regards the Church? "Does it mean more trouble?" you will ask. We think it does. Dear friends, we are waiting for that chariot and whirlwind. "What will it be?" Well, we know that the Lord pictures the great time of anarchy that is coming as a great whirlwind. He says, "Behold, evil shall go forth from nation to nation, and a great whirlwind shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth. And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; they shall not be lamented, neither gathered nor buried; they shall be dung upon the ground." Jeremiah 25:30-33 ;30:23, 24.

To our understanding the Elijah class will be amongst the first to be affected by the great whirlwind of anarchy. We believe it signifies that many of the Lord's people—all of the faithful at that time—will be taken from the present life in some anarchistic movement. We would not talk about these things to the public; for the public would not be interested in them. The Master said, "Cast not your pearls before swine." We are talking about it here because we think that all here are deeply interested, and are expecting to share in the chariot and whirlwind experience. Here is the point, then. We think that our final experiences will be during some kind of anarchistic uprising. For some time we have been wondering just how all the Church would be taken. If the "change" comes to each one by death in the usual way, it would seem very wonderful to see the consecrated all over the world die suddenly. Neither can they all die of old age; for this would mean that some would have to live a good many years yet.

THREE IMPORTANT POINTS.

But here is the way the Lord pictures the matter: First, there will be the chariot of fire. We do not know what this will be; but we understand that some fiery experiences will cause a separation between the two classes of the Lord's people. Then will develop the whirlwind of anarchy. Perhaps this will be mobs that will destroy the lives of the faithful ones. We do not know. We cannot imagine now just what it will be. We do not wish to think anything foolish; we are merely studying the type, or picture. We do not intend to do anything to get into trouble. To do so would be like what the Devil suggested to Jesus: "Cast Thyself down from the pinnacle of the Temple." We are to be just as wise, kind, meek, gentle, and as faithful to the Lord as we know how to be, and then have our minds perfectly calm and restful. When the Lord's time for us comes, all will be right. Let us rest in His love and wisdom and care. What He provides for His children will be the very best thing for us, and we shall be glad to have it.

"Are you expecting the fiery chariot any minute now, or do you think it some little distance off—perhaps some months yet, or perhaps a year or more?" will be asked. At least a year, or probably more, is my thought. Something else is coming first, dear friends. We do not as yet see clearly just what it is; but this matter of Elijah's rolling his mantle together and smiting the waters of Jordan seems to mean something, and also the crossing of the river. This picture is not given for nothing. "What does it mean?" you ask. Ah, we know that most prophecies are understood only after they are fulfilled! We might, however, have a suspicion. "What would that be?" Something like this: In Bible symbolic language, water represents Truth, and it also represents peoples. Both of these are given in Scripture as being symbolized by water. (Revelation 17-1; Jeremiah 51:12, 13; Revelation 17:15; 22:1, 2; Ezekiel 47:1-12; Ephesians 5:26). Furthermore, Jordan means *testing,* or *judging down.* Now who or what would be judged in the antitype?

WHAT ELIJAH'S MANTLE MAY SIGNIFY.

We answer, we believe that the peoples of earth, the public in general, are to be judged by the Truth. The peoples are represented by waters. It would seem that in some way the people are to be judged and tested; and that a division of public sentiment is to be caused, in connection with the Truth. Waters are to be separated from waters, people from people, the Truth being received by some and rejected by others. Elijah wrapped his mantle together and smote the waters; and they were divided. Elijah's mantle was the outward indication, or sign, of God's power with him, and represented God's power and blessing with the Church. The mantle was in Elijah's hand when he smote the waters with it. So the Church, it would seem, will use what is in their hand, the power and authority of the Truth, the power of God, in smiting the waters—peoples.

"Do you think that this has not yet taken place?" may be a question in your minds. We think it has not as yet fully taken place. "Do you not think that the Photo-Drama of Creation has had a part in this?" It may be. "Will there be something more?" We do not know. WE RATHER THINK THERE IS SOMETHING MORE. We do not state this positively. We are keeping watch to see in what way God will exercise some very wonderful power causing some division as respects the Truth. We are merely thinking aloud with you. We are looking for some very pronounced division on the subject of the Truth, something that will eventually lead up to a great hatred. You remember that in our Lord's ministry He presented certain truths that caused the Scribes and Pharisees to hate Him. It was their hatred that led up to His arrest and crucifixion. The hate was there. They said, "we must kill Him."

We shall not do anything foolish; we shall not go out on the streets to stir up trouble. We are to exercise the spirit of a sound mind—gentleness, meekness, patience, brotherly-kindness and love. We are to be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves." (Galations 5:22, 23; Matthew 10:16). All these instructions we must not forget. But when we see any trouble coming upon us when we are doing what is right, when we are obeying the Lord, then we are able to take it as from Him. If we do not manifest the Master's spirit, if we speak proudly or boastfully to people, then we shall have it to regret that we did not follow in the footsteps of Jesus. Z. '16:38-40.

SIGNIFICATION OF ELIJAH'S MANTLE

Referring to the picture, we note that Elijah and Elisha journeyed together until they reached the Jordan, and there they stood and talked awhile. Then Elijah took his mantle, wrapped it up and smote the waters of the Jordan. The waters represent the peoples; and their separation would picture the separation of people from people. We are to keep in mind that Elijah had this mantle all during his journey, and that not until he reached Jordan did he wrap up the mantle and use it to smite the waters (people). We are also reminded that the antitypical Elijah class has had *the message of truth* during their entire journey of the harvest of the Gospel age. Brother Russell pointed out that October, 1914, antityped Elijah and Elisha standing at the Jordan, talking the matter over; that this was the last point to which Elijah was directed to go, and that it represented the last definite date we had concerning the church. He then pointed out that something else must be done after that time. We quote Brother Russell:

"Elijah and Elisha came to the River of Jordan. They stopped there and stood talking. Something must be done before they could go further. So the Lord's people have been standing for a time since we came to October, 1914. Then Elijah took his mantle, wrapped it together and smote the waters of Jordan."

In Ezekiel 21:14, 15, we read: "Let the sword be doubled the third time," which to our mind would represent the message of truth contained in the first six volumes of Studies in the Scriptures. And then we read: "I have set the *point of the sword* against all their gates, that their heart may faint and their ruins be multiplied. Ah, it is made lightning brightness; *it is wrapped up for the slaughter.*" We suggest that this represents the message of truth contained in the Seventh Volume, which is in truth and in fact a condensed statement of the entire message relating to Babylon and the true Church and the relationship between the two, as set forth in the preceding six volumes. Therefore, it is properly designated "the point of the sword," and is wrapped up (put into compact form) for the purpose of doing the smiting, viz., the separation of people from people. In the eighth chapter of Revelation, verses 3 to 5, seemingly referring to the same message, we read that it (the message) "is deliberately hurled into the earth;" that is to say, deliberately distributed broadcast amongst order-loving people.

The message of truth contained in Volume Seven of Studies in the Scriptures, therefore seems to be more fitly represented in Elijah's wrapped-up mantle than does anything else. If that is true, then it follows that it is the message of truth sent far and wide amongst the people that will cause the division or separation; and it is manifest beyond the question of a doubt that it is the Elijah class that uses it, and not Elisha. It is easy to be seen how that the Elijah class, persisting in the proclamation of the message against Babylon, (ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS), would thus separate themselves from the Elisha class, who would be fearful or negligent of performing any part of this work; and that Elijah, continuing thus to use the point of the sword, would in due time be taken up in the whirlwind of anarchy.

In harmony with the thoughts above expressed, we call attention to the words of Revelation 19:17: "And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God." The angel here clearly is the Elijah class, standing in the resplendent light of the Gospel, now more brilliantly illuminated than ever before by reason of having the interpretations of the lurid prophecies of Ezekiel and John. And thus standing in the light, they are joyful, fearlessly and plainly declaring the message of truth, calling first to the eagles (Matthew 24:28), their brethren in Christ, the far-sighted ones, to come and join in this glorious feast that the Lord has spread before us. And may he give every one of his little ones the courage and faith and strength to stand (FAST) at this time. Those who faithfully trust and follow our great Captain will ultimately be brought off more than conquerors, yea, most fervent overcomers.

We emphasize the fact that the church—Elijah and Elisha—were standing in 1914, talking together. When Brother Russell died in 1916 everything seemed to have come to a standstill. No one seemed to know exactly what should be done. Then suddenly something was delivered to the Church. What was it? All remember how that on a certain day in July, 1917, the message of the truth wrapped up in compact form in "The Finished Mystery" was delivered into the hands of the Church; and then the antitypical Elijah had the message in such form that it could be used for the smiting of the antitypical Jordan; and the smiting began. Z. '18, 54, 55.

LITTLE FLOCK AND GREAT COMPANY SEPARATED

QUESTION MEETING—BROTHER RUSSELL

Question 10. Are we to understand that there are two classes in the Court—the tentatively justified not having entered the Holy, and the Scape Goat class having come out of the Holy?

Answer. We understand that the Court will represent more fully the condition of the future. But in the present time it represents all those who are approaching God and whom we speak of as tentatively justified, approaching justification, doing their best to attain justification, and ultimately represented as in the hands of the Priest.

But as for the Great Company Class, I think we are to understand that there is no Great Company Class at the present time, 1916, that the Great Company Class will first be manifested when the Elijah Class will be separated by the fiery chariot, *that from that time and onward it would be proper to speak of some as being of the Little Flock and others of the Great Company,* but that the division not yet (1916) having been made of the Lord, you and I would not be authorized to recognize any such division which God has not recognized. It will be for Him to determine who are of the Little Flock and who of the Great Company. So we are not expected to recognize any as being in the Court and thus distinct from those in the Holy. Rather we are to understand from the Apostle's words that all were called in one hope of their calling, and that all who have been received of the Lord have been anointed by the begetting of the Holy Spirit, therefore they cannot any longer be human beings, for they must attain either to perfection on the Divine plane, the Little Flock, or the Great Company plane as we speak of it—on the spiritual plane, or die the second death, because they have renounced and given up all their rights and share in the earthly nature in order to receive the begetting of the Spirit at all. We do not understand, therefore, that they are to be viewed as being in the Court at the present time, but after the Lord *has manifested the distinction* between the Elijah Class, the Royal Priesthood Class, and the Great Company Class, (the Elisha Class,) then thereafter these will be represented as being in the Court. But not yet. The division has not yet (1916) taken place. (Question Meeting, 1916.—Brother Russell.)

(THE LORD IS TODAY "MANIFESTING THE DISTINCTION" BETWEEN THE ELIJAH AND THE ELISHA CLASS. SOON THE ELIJAH CLASS WILL BE TAKEN HOME IN THE WHIRLWIND.)

YOUR PRECIOUS FAITH

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."—1 Pet. 1:7.

Faith has in it the two elements of intellectual assurance and heart reliance. The former is faith in the abstract sense; the latter is its concrete form. It is in this latter, fullest sense we read that, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." (Rom. 10:10.) Both the head and the heart—the intellect and the affections—are necessary to that faith without which it is "impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6); though many fancy they have faith when they have only one of its essential elements. With some it is all emotion; with others it is all intellectuality; but neither of these can stand the tests of fiery ordeal; they must abide together if they are to endure to the end and be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

An intellectual grasp of the fundamental principles of divine truth—viz., of the existence of a personal, intelligent God, the Creator and Sustainer of all things, and of his purpose and plan of redemption through his only begotten and well-beloved Son, Jesus Christ—constitutes the *foundation* of faith; while trust and reliance to the extent of his promises, upon the personal God who is the author of our being and who, as a Father, invites the implicit confidence and love of his children, make up the *superstructure* of our faith.

The trial of our faith to which the Lord and the apostles refer is therefore a trial, not only of our intellectual recognition of divine truth, but also of our heart reliance upon God. In both respects every true child of God will find his faith severely tried, and, as a soldier of Christ, let him not fail to be armed for the conflict. If an attack is made upon the intellectual foundation of our faith we should see to it that we have a, "Thus saith the Lord," for every item of our belief. Let the Word of God settle every question, and let no human philosophies, however ingenious, lead us into the labyrinths of error; for if the foundations of faith become unsettled, the superstructure cannot stand when the winds and the floods of adversity and temptation beat against it. Doubt and fear will cause it to tremble, and when it is thus weakened the vigilant adversary will surely send a blast of temptation against it, and great will be the soul's peril.

Let us, therefore, look well to the foundations of our faith—study the doctrine and get a clear intellectual conception of every element of divine truth which the inspired Word presents to the people of God; let us become rooted, grounded, settled, established in the faith, the doctrines of God, and hold them fast: they are the divine credentials; and let us give earnest heed to them, lest at any time we should let them slip.—Heb. 2:1.

But having the doctrines clearly comprehended as foundations of faith, we need also to look well to the superstructure of heart reliance, which is really in greater danger from storms and floods than are the foundations, being more constantly exposed. The Apostle Peter tells us that a tried, proved faith, a faith that has stood the tests of fiery ordeal and come off victorious, is very precious in the sight of God. That is, that every time we pass through a conflict and still retain, not only the truth, but also our confidence in God and reliance upon his promises in the dark as well as in the light, our integrity of heart and of purpose, and our zeal for truth and righteousness, our characters have grown stronger, more symmetrical and more Christ-like, and hence more pleasing to God, who is thus subjecting us to discipline for this very thing.

Therefore, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the *fiery trial* which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (1 Pet. 4:12, 13.) It is worthy of notice here that special reference is made, not to the tests of intellectual belief brought about by the presentation of false doctrine, but to reproaches and persecution for Christ's sake, either for adherence to his doctrines or conformity to his righteousness; for, the Apostle adds, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." He warns us to take heed only that we suffer not as evil-doers, "Yet," he says, "if any man suffer as a Christian (that is, either for Christian principles or Christian doctrine), let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf."

The Prophet Daniel also says that particularly in this time of the end, "many shall be purified and made white and *tried*"; and Malachi (3:2, 3) compares the trials of this time to the "refiner's fire" and to "fuller's soap," which are designed to refine and purify the Lord's people. The Apostle Paul urges that we fight the good fight of faith, and patiently endure afflictions to the end. (1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 2:3.) And many are the words of consolation and blessed comfort offered by the Psalmist and others to the tempest-tossed and suffering people of God.—See Psa. 77:1-14; 116:1-14; 34:19; 31:24; 2 Thes. 3:3.

Are you then, dear brother or sister, hard pressed on every side with temptations to doubt that God's protection, love and care are *yours*, that his precious promises belong to *you?* Have you grown discouraged and disheartened? Do the foes seem too many and too strong for you? Do the reproaches come with crushing weight, and do the clouds hang heavy over your seemingly defenseless head? Ah, it is just here that faith must claim her victory! Is it not promised, "This is the victory that overcometh, . . . even your faith?" It is your faith that is on trial now. In the calmer days when the sun of favor shone brightly upon you, you were quietly laying the foundation of a knowledge of the truth, and rearing the superstructure of Christian character. Now you are in the furnace to be proved: summon therefore all your courage; fortify your patience; nerve yourself to endurance; hold fast to your hope; call to mind the promises, they are still yours; and "cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength," "Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him," and faith has gained her vitory. Then in due time the Lord's hand will be recognized in making all things work together for good to you according to his promise. This proof of your faith, says Peter, is more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire.—Z. '95-134.

THE TRIAL HOUR

Eph. 6:10-18.

The " hour of temptation" hath come to the church,
The time of her testing is here,
And storm clouds of ominous portent roll up,
Betoken the tempest is near.

The carnage grows fiercer 'twixt error and truth,
The hosts of the foe press around,
As the day waxes late, and the shadows grow long,
And their tauntings and boastings abound.

And many who fought in the ranks by our side,
Have been pierced by the enemy's dart;
Their "shield" and their 'helmet" lie prone in the dust,
And the "arrow" hath smitten their heart.

Their arm lost its cunning in wielding the "sword,"
Their "breastplate" was loosed from its place,
The "helmet" was lost, and the shafts of the foe
Smote them down, and they sank in disgrace.

O, dear fellow-soldiers! O, brethren in Christ!
Let us gird up our "armor" anew!
Let us heed the sure Word of our Leader and "Head,"
And be loyal and steadfast and true.

The night hastens on—only one hour to fight;
No thought now of wavering or fear;
Our captain calls "Onward!" Then close up the ranks,
For the hour of our victory is near.

Courage, comrades! The banner of truth waves aloft;
No such banner was ever unfurled!
We will follow its lead, e'en thru' carnage and blood,
For by it we shall conquer the world.

Tho' feet may grow weary, and hearts throb with pain,
Let us never give up in the fray;
Our Captain is strong, and can know no defeat,
And will guide to the end of the way.

Soon the fight will be over, the conflict be past,
And the "roll-call" will sound thru' the sky;
Will you answer your name? *Shall I answer to mine?*
Can we glady respond; "Here am I?"

O, God of the battle, our Father, to Thee
With strong supplication we cry!
The conflict is deadly, and wily our foe,
Yet we know that deliverance is nigh.

And thru who hast guided and led all the way,
Wilt guide 'till the victory is won,
'Till the night is all spent and the glad day hath dawned,
And we hear Thy sweet plaudit, "Well done!"

THE ADVERSARY'S TACTICS

"For we are not ignorant of his devices."—2 *Cor.* 2:11.

Ephesians 6:12.—*"We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."*

As we progress toward the consummation of the Harvest, it should not surprise us that in every way the Adversary becomes more persistent in his attacks. Opposition to the Divine Plan of the Ages is on the increase everywhere. Slanderous misrepresentations are so unblushingly made as to carry a measure of conviction with them, to the injury of the Cause we serve.

What Satan cannot do against the Truth along the lines of logic, the Bible and common sense, he seeks to do through slanderous misrepresentations of all who take their stand on the side of Truth; and his opposition is incurred usually in proportion to the activity of the servants of the Truth. This opposition is to them a trial of faith and of patient endurance. It tests their loyalty to God, to the Truth and to the brethren. It becomes, likewise, a test of brotherly love to the household of faith. It does a sifting or separating work. "The Lord your God proveth you."—Deut. 13:3.

The same line of attack furnishes special trials for the church nominal—both wheat and tares. It gives opportunity for exhibitions of envy, anger, malice, hatred, strife, evil-surmising and evil-speaking. Thus many are being tested and their love of unrighteousness is being shown. "By their fruits ye shall know them." (Matt. 7:20.) The thorn and brier classes, however closely affiliated with religious things, are not Vine branches. They do not bear the fruit of the Vine, but contrariwise are injurious to the Lord's people. "The poison of asps is under their lips." Some of them are courageous enough to make lies; others, less courageous, love the lies and are mean enough to circulate them. The advance of the Day of the Lord will ultimately reveal the true situation. Some will have shame and contempt, while others will shine as the stars forever and ever.

All who have the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness and love—will be tested, too, along these same lines. The Lord's will for such is that they should deepen and broaden their characters along all these lines in proportion as contrary temptations assail them. Thus more and more will they become copies of God's dear Son. and the trials will assist in making them meet, fit for the Kingdom.

ACCUSER OF THE BRETHREN.

Another of Satan's devices is to discourage the Lord's faithful disciples who are seeking to know and to do His will. The more conscientious they are, the more subject they will be to Satan's suggestions of unworthiness, rejection, condemnation, Second Death. God permits this as a test or trial to faith. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him." To be developed, faith must be tried with opposition. The more our faith is developed, the more pleasing in the Father's sight we shall be. He would have our faith in Himself implicit, unwavering.

The Adversary, on the contrary, would destroy our faith. Sometimes he attempts this by misrepresenting God's character as unloving, unjust, unkind, and sometimes by exaggerating our weaknesses and failures, to cause us to cease striving for the goal of Divine approval. He would have us give up in dispair.

Persons who have been obsessed by evil spirits tell plainly that first of all the spirits personated God and His angels, advised prayer, etc. Afterwards they gave evil suggestions. By and by they gave both good and evil suggestions. The evil suggestions entertained, they would next condemn the individual for having entertained them. Finally all pretense would be dropped, and the individual would be told that he had sinned away all Divine favor and was wholly at the mercy of the evil spirits. Then would come suggestions of evil deeds or of suicide, the endeavor being made to drive the individual to a full surrender of his mind, his will, in order to full possession and mental unbalance.

The only remedy for persons in such a deplorable condition is that they exert their will power to oppose all such false suggestions. Nothing is so helpful under such circumstances as correct knowledge of the Divine teaching respecting God's Love and the abundance of His merciful provision in Christ. Person's in this condition should be encouraged to cast themselves fully and unreservedly at the foot of the cross in the spirit of their minds—in fullness of consecration. Then in proportion to their faith they may lay hold upon the Lord in prayer for complete deliverance from the Adversary's power. We know of no other way to get rid of the evil spirits.

There are also cases where the obsession has taken place and where the Adversary seems to be able to exercise an evil influence upon the mind, causing doubt, fear, alienation from the Lord. Generally "sin lieth at the door"—some violation of the soul's covenants with the Lord. Such are in danger of great gloom, loss of faith, trust—everything. The cure for their case is a knowledge of God's real character—His great Love and sympathy exercised through the Lord Jesus Christ and made available through Him to all who give their lives in full consecration.

Faith should triumph, or the light of joy and blessing will die. "According to your faith be it unto you," is the Divine rule. Those who will not exercise the faith will never be acceptable to the Father for membership in the Kingdom class. Such must wait for the next Age and have different experiences. The Little Flock, the Elect ones whom the Lord is now choosing, must all be faith-*full*.

"THE WICKED ONE TOUCHETH HIM NOT."

The Apostle John declares that a certain course of conduct is possible in which the Adversary would be unable to touch us. (1 John 5:18.) The picture brought before our mental eyes is that of a charmed circle, within which God's people may come. This circle is not a fence, but merely a line of light, which can easily be overstepped. On the inside of that circle is the Lord's favor. The very center of it is the Lord Himself, the Head of the Church. The exhortation of the Scriptures, the leadings of the Holy Spirit, and the providences of the Lord, all encourage His followers to press close to Him—"Nearer, my God, to Thee."

Outside the charmel circle are the powers of evil. These are sometimes allowed to touch the earthly interests and temporal affairs of the children of the Light; but the demon influence is not permitted to really touch the New Creatures in Christ inside this circle. Over that line they cannot exercise their influence. But alas! lured by the world, the flesh and the Devil, some of the saints at times go too close to the line, perhaps pursuing some fleshly bait or golden bauble or earthly honor. Such the Adversary is ever ready to lay hold of, to drag them out into the darkness of sin, doubt, despair—further and further away from the Lord.

The lesson of this picture to all Spirit-begotten children of God is, "Abide in Him," "Abstain from all appearance of evil," "Draw near unto God," "Press onward and upward," "Take heed to yourselves," "Forget the things that are behind," "Mortify your flesh," and earthly desires and ambitions, Keep close to the Master, that "the Wicked One touch you not."

But we again remind any who may be touched by the Adversary and temporarily ensnared that God is full of loving kindness, that His mercy endureth forever, for all those who desire to live in harmony with Him. While it is true that the nearer we get to the separating line, the nearer do we come within the range of the Adversary's influence and power, and the weaker becomes the power of the Truth, the Spirit of the Lord, in our control, nevertheless, there is joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth, and the Lord will welcome the strayed sheep, even though He temporarily allow trying experiences. Ultimately to the returning one these experiences will prove valuable lessons, safeguarding against any further tendency to stray or to dally with earthly things.—Z. '12-387.

"Shall we continue faithfully to recognize and to partake of that 'Meat In Due Season' provided for us by the Lord through His 'Wise and Faithful Servant.'" Z '17-6.

THE FINAL CONFLICT

"Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.—Ephesians, 6:11, 12.

Darkness hates the light. "Ye are the light of the world," said the great Master concerning His people. The Church is near the end of its earthly pilgrimage and the hour of the final conflict is at hand. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. The words of St. John now seem appropriate: "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive the full reward."—2 John 8.

For more than six thousand years a great battle has been waged between good and evil—light and darkness. The fight has involved the entire human family. God in His wisdom has permitted the forces of evil to prevail for a time, but the time is near at hand when the tide of battle shall turn. The conflict has resulted in great carnage, thousands of millions having succumbed to the agencies of darkness. It has been attended with untold sorrow. The fight had its beginning when our first parents were driven from Eden. It will end only at the end of the Millennial Age.

When Jesus was on earth He fought the same good fight of faith, and for a time it seemed that the enemy had vanquished Him, but shortly He proved that He had triumphed over death and the grave. His victory was complete—His reward the highest of all. Through Him God brought life and immortality to light, and has made known His purposes to all who have imbibed His Spirit and sought to follow in His footsteps.

Since Pentecost God has been selecting the Church, the members of which are called to follow in the footsteps of the great Master, fighting as He fought, and they must gain the victory before receiving the "crown of life."

THE GREAT ARMIES.

There are two great armies engaged in this conflict. On the side of evil is the army of darkness, marshalled by Satan, the prince of darkness. On the other side is the army of Light with Jesus Christ as its Field-Marshal, leading His host on to certain victory.

Every man and woman on earth is doing service this day for one or the other of these armies. *There is no middle ground;* as St. Paul clearly puts it, "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom you obey; whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness?"—Romans, 6:16.

The Lord's army on earth is composed of those who have turned away from the world of sin and darkness and are following the Master whithersoever He goeth because of their full consecration and love for Him. All such manifest the spirit of Christ; all others are in the army of Satan. Who is on the Lord's side? On which side are you?

The Church this side of the veil is the Church militant, meaning the Church at war. It is both an individual and a collective warfare. Each one must fight the good fight of faith and be victorious before he can attain to the position of joint-heirship with the Lord, and each one having the Master's spirit will fight together with all the other members of the Body to maintain the spirit of unity in the Body. All such must fight under the leadership of their Captain. The same admonition St. Paul gave to Timothy applies to each member of the Body: "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare." "Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." (1 Tim. 1:18; 6:12.) Again St. Paul said, "Only let the lives you live be worthy of the Gospel, that we may know who are STANDING FAST in one spirit and with one mind, fighting shoulder to shoulder for the faith of the Good News. Never for a moment quail before your antagonists."—Phil. 1:27, 28. Weymouth.

To a soldier who engages in war it is of the greatest importance that he knows who his enemies are, their number and force. A good soldier will study to know what will be the method of attack by the enemy, and seek to strengthen his position of defense that he may repel every assault. In the Christian warfare this is even more vital Before we can successfully engage in the great and final conflict, the battle that must be decisive with us, it is of the utmost importance that we carefully consider the number, force and strength of the enemy, and his method of attack.

ENEMIES FORESHADOWED.

Goliath pictured Satan and his cohorts. None of the host of Israel would attempt to fight him until David came upon the scene. Satan found none willing and able to cope with him until the antitypical David—Christ Jesus—championed the cause of righteousness on behalf of mankind. David represents the entire Christ, Head and Body. His experiences foreshadowed the fight in which they must engage.

In our text the Apostle Paul particularly warns the Church concerning our enemies. Another translation renders it thus: "For ours is not a conflict with mere flesh and blood, but with spiritual beings in unseen places, despotisms, empires, the forces that control and govern this dark world, *the spiritual host of evil* (*host of evil spirits*) arrayed against us in the heavenly warfare." (Weymouth.) Eph. 6:12. Our enemies or adversaries may be divided into four divisions, designated as the flesh, the world, the Devil and the evil spirit.

HOW JESUS OVERCAME.

That all members of the New Creation must fight these enemies is clearly shown from the fact that our Master was subjected to such trials, and further evidence thereof is the positive statements of the Apostle. It is important that we take heed to the Master's method of meeting these attacks.

After our Lord had been fasting for 40 days and nights and was weak and emaciated, Satan approached Him, first suggesting that He change stones into bread for the gratification of His own flesh. Jesus met this attack with the Sword of the Spirit, saying, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Then Satan suggested to Him that while it was true He was to be the King, it would require a long time for Him to convince the people, therefore He should go up on the Temple and jump into the valley, that Jehovah would save Him and thus He would demonstrate to the people that He was more than an ordinary creature. In the same manner Jesus met this attack: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord Thy God." Then Satan made a direct attack upon the Master, suggesting that if Jesus would join him, he (Satan) would turn over to Him all the kingdoms of earth, only Jesus must *recognize and give proper honor* to Satan. Yielding to either one of these temptations would have been a violation of His Covenant. Jesus met this attack with the words, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve."

PRINCIPLE VERSUS PASSION.

God governs the entire universe by fixed principles, and everyone who is governed contrary thereto is governed by passion. This is clearly demonstrated in Jesus' method of defense against the Adversary. Many seem not to be able to understand what is meant by "PRINCIPLE." Seemingly they think it is whatever they themselves may consider to be right when guided by their conscience, or by the argument of someone else. "Principle" means, a settled rule of action; the governing law of conduct.

> (*One of the great principles set forth in the Bible and still maintained by the saints who are standing fast in this evil day is, that: The true Church is not of this world and leads a life altogether separate from it, therefore those who would be members of this Church must not seek the friendship of the world on any account whatsoever; Brother Russell says: The saints may influence the world only by their SEPARATENESS from it, by letting their light shine; and thus through their lives the spirit of truth REPROVES the world. A.* 267. *Brother James says: "Whoever is bent on being friendly with the world makes himself an ENEMY OF GOD. James* 4:4.*—Weymouth. Carefully read also John* 17:14-16; *II Cor.* 6:14-17; *Gal.* 1:10. *"TOUCH nothing impure; and I will receive you, and will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters," says the Lord, the Ruler of all." II Cor.* 6:17-18. *Weymouth.*)

This *rule of action,* or governing law of conduct, is set forth in the Bible, God's Word, and all who are governed by the *Word of God* are governed by principle. "Passion" means the capacity of being affected by external agencies; to be controlled by outside influence; susceptible to control from external influences. The New Creation must avoid passion and be governed *always by* *principle.* If we are influenced or swayed in our judgment, or conclusion about anything by reason of what others may say or do, we are governed to that extent by passion. If we prayerfully and diligently seek to know what is the Lord's will and *what His Word says* on the matter, and are governed by that, *then we are governed by* Principle.

Attack and temptation, within the meaning of the Scriptures, are one and the same thing. We have no power to turn stones into bread, but have received spiritual powers which may be used for selfish purposes contrary to God's will. For example, making merchandise of the Gospel; preaching for the applause of men or using our spiritual powers for any other selfish purpose. Concerning such, the Apostle Peter says: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.—1 Peter 5:2.

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St. Paul emphasizes the fact that the conflict of the Church in the end of the Age will be particularly with the evil spirits. These evil spirits have been restrained since the great Deluge and their Day of Judgment is at hand. We therefore should expect that they would be able to exercise greater power over the human race now than at any time since their restraint. Many Scriptures clearly indicate that the *real battle ground* of the Christian *is in the mind,* therefore the attack of the evil spirits will be expected along this line. We learn from one who was long subject to the influence of these demons that their method of attack is as follows: First, by

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The Apostle tells us, "God resisteth the proud but giveth grace to the humble-minded." From this we would understand that humility of mind and heart would be a special protection provided by the Lord; and that any one manifesting spiritual pride or ambition, the Lord would remove from such one this protection, and the evil spirit would have special power over him. Time and again through the columns of The Watch Tower the Lord's Servant to the Laodicean Church gave warning of these enemies. We quote here a few of his sayings:

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"As soon as the power that is now controlling them shall be removed, we shall have a reign of evil all over the earth. The evil spirits will do all the evil that is in their power, and this will constitute the trial of all the fallen angels—the lifting of the restraints to see whether they will go contrary to the Divine will. All who thus manifest their alliance with evil in any way will become subjects of the Second Death; while others who show their loyalty to God will mark themselves as worthy, presumably, of everlasting life. It may be something in connection with the saints that will constitute the test of these angels. This will be the key, the secret connected with the awful Time of Trouble which the Bible tells us will mark the conclusion of this Age and which will constitute the forerunner or beginning of the New Dispensation."

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WICKED SPIRITS USE HUMAN AGENTS.

The evil ones use human agencies to attack members of the Body. We may reasonably expect that all of the Lord's servants who are actively engaged in the closing hours of the Harvest will be attacked through human agencies by these evil spirits. Time and again the enemy assaulted the reputation of our dear Brother Russell. He was taken away, however, before the evil spirits were permitted to exercise their full power. Now we may expect that all manner of charges and attacks will be made by them through human agencies against the reputation, character and standing of others who are engaged in the Harvest work, which will constitute a test to all the brethren, as to whether they will be governed by "Passion" (outside influence), or whether they will be governed by the "Principle" of God's Word. The more prominent position occupied by one in the Harvest work, the more venomous will be the attacks. *Let each one examine his own heart carefully and see to it that his own conclusions are based upon right principles, namely, the Word of God and not upon outside influenec. No other course is safe.*

HOW TO REPEL ATTACKS.

All the Scriptures bearing upon the point indicate that the conflict will be more severe as we near the end. Referring to this time St. Paul says, *"Finally,* my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might."—Ephesians, 6:10.

The clear inference here is that each soldier of the Cross must have special strength in order to stand *at this time,* and to repel the combined attack of Satan and his coadjutors. If we look at it from one standpoint, we would become dismayed and despair of winning, but looking at it from another viewpoint, we know that He who is for us is greater than all who can be against us; and He being for us, none can prevail against us. We are now in the Evil Day. How, then, may we have the strength needed? The Apostle tells us of the armor of God provided for us, which will prove invulnerable to all attacks of the Adversary. "Wherefore, take unto you *the whole armor* of God that ye may be able to withstand (resist) in the Evil Day, and having done all, to STAND FAST, (remain a victor)." Ephesians, 6:13. The assurance here is that he who has this armor on, keeps it on and learns to use it properly, will be able to stand.

While the Apostle used as an illustration the human warrior, clothed in the proper and complete accoutrements of war, yet he did not mean that the Christian needs this kind of armor. The armor of the Lord is for the New Creature because his warfare is not carnal warfare, but a spiritual warfare. 2 Corinthians, 10:4, 5.

WHAT IS THE ARMOR?

God is the maker of this armor through human instrumentalities. The armor consists of His Word, the Message of Truth, put into proper shape to be used for the benefit of the New Creation. Describing this armor in detail, the Apostle says:

"Having your loins girt about with the truth." The girdle is a symbol of servitude, and suggests that no one is safe at this time unless he is a servant of *the Truth.* Those engaged in evil surmising, fault-finding, back-biting, slander, libel or other works of darkness are not servants of the Truth. On the contrary, let each one of us see to it that he guards himself against such wiles of the Adversary, and that he possesses the zeal peculiar to the House of the Lord and earnestly and zealously follows in the Master's footsteps by serving His Cause at this time.

"And having on the breastplate of righteousness." The breastplate was used to cover the vital organs of the body, particularly the heart. A proper condition of heart is vital to the New Creature. A righteous heart indicates purity, righteous motives, righteousness of character. "Keep thine heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Matt. 5:8.) "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him." 2 Chronicles, 16:9.

"And your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace." The soldier who engages in warfare must keep well his feet. If they are not shod they become sore, his attention is directed more to the soreness than to his duties. The New Creature has now many rough roads to travel. Therefore the Feet members should be clothed with the message of peace and see to it that all anger, malice, hatred and strife, ill-will, back-biting, fault-finding, accusations of the brethren be put aside. *None other will be able to stand.* "Follow peace with all, men and holiness, without which no man shall see the LORD." (Heb. 12:14.) Those who hunt trouble now will surely find it; they will find little else. Those who avoid trouble find it necessary to be diligent in keeping themselves in the peace and love of God.

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." Eph. 6:16. The enemy is constantly firing wicked darts at the soldiers of the Cross. These darts are liable to stir up in your mind doubts, fears, skepticism. The shield of faith is the protection. FAITH MEANS THE INTELLECTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION OF THE WORD OF GOD—TRUE PRINCIPLES—and a confident reliance upon that word. "Without *faith* it is impossible to please God." "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." Heb. 11:6. 1 John 5:4.

"And take the helmet of salvation." The helmet fitted over the head and represents the intellectual understanding and appreciation of the Divine Plan. This knowledge of God's Word, and His methods and His information concerning the methods of the Adversary, is absolutely essential in order to protect ourselves against the evil ones of this day. If we had no knowledge of the demons and their methods of attack, we could not be forearmed against them.

"And the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." This is both an offensive and a defensive weapon. We must have it and know how to use it. Jesus wielded it successfully to each attack made upon Him. He said, *"It is written,"* and such must be *our battle cry.* We are not to use carnal weapons, nor such weapons as Satan uses. We are to use the Truth and let the Truth do the cutting.

It is noticed that the Apostle names only six parts of the armor, whereas the armor of the ancient soldier was in seven parts. Seven is also a symbol of perfection. The seventh part, the one not named by the Apostle, was the greaves, and was a metal shield fitting over the front part of the foot to protect it from darts of the adversary. The Feet members of the Church are now engaged in the fight. The greaves, therefore, would properly and fittingly represent the Vow. When it was promulgated our attention was called to this Scripture: "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Isaiah 59:19.

HOW TO PUT ON THE ARMOR.

The words of the Apostle assume that the persons addressed have renounced the world and enlisted under the banner of the Lord by making a full surrender of their will to do God's will. Hence he says by illustration:

(1) *Girdle*—Servitude. Be a zealous and faithful servant of the Truth. Let there be but one motive for service—love for God and His righteous cause. "By love serve."

(2) *Breastplate*—Righteousness. Having on the robe of Christ's righteousness now, study to be approved of God. Learn the great and vital principles of His Word and apply them to daily living; be controlled by these and let them work out in you a righteous character. *Keep a pure heart.*

(3) *Sandals*—Peace. Do not hunt trouble. Live in peace with all SO LONG AS GOD'S LAW ("PRINCIPLES") IS NOT SACRIFICED. Accept your part of suffering with joy.

(4) *Shield*—Faith. Maintain an abiding faith in God and in His sure Word of Promise. *Rely upon His Word and not upon the advice or influence of others.* Stand (fast), leaning only on the Lord.

(5) *Helmet*—Salvation. Strive to increase in heart appreciation of God and the Lord Jesus. Continue in the study of the Word. Feed upon the food provided. Keep always before your mind the strong hope of salvation and the high position to which you have been called.

(6) *Sword*—Word of God. Know God's Word, in letter and spirit. Be able to give a reason for the hope you have. Use it deftly in repelling the adversaries. Let your battle cry be, "It is written."

(7) *Vow.* Daily put in practice the Vow in letter and spirit. Take the Lord Jesus with you in all things. Be filled with His Spirit.

If you do these things you shall be strong in the Lord and have the power which His supreme strength imparts and shall be a certain victor.

THE FINAL CONFLICT OF THE "EVIL DAY."

This is the Evil Day; the time when every man's work is being tried in the fiery furnace; these are perilous times of which we have been warned; it is the last battle, the great and final conflict. The enemy is advancing from every quarter. Shall we quail before our adversaries? No, thank God, for He has made ample provision for His people. The whole armor of God is now supplied. It was never so much needed as now. Those who have it *principle.* If we are influenced or swayed in our judgment, or conclusion about anything by reason of what others may say or do, we are governed to that extent by passion. If we prayerfully and diligently seek to know what is the Lord's will and *what His Word says* on the matter, and are governed by that, *then we are governed by* Principle.

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Another says: "It is evidently God's purpose soon to allow minds of many of His little ones to become an open battle-ground, upon which the fallen angels shall be judged, and the manner in which we meet the tests will prove our worthiness of crowns at the same time that it proves these disobedient spirits unworthy of life on any plane. This is something with which some, but not many, are yet familiar. Truly, we know the Apostle in writing of this Evil Day says, 'We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places.' Truly we know the Lord Jesus at the First Advent began his ministry with forty days of conflict with the Adversary, who all that time sought to sway His mind. Truly we have reason to believe He must have had other terrible battles when He spent all night in prayer, and especially when He was so depressed in the Garden of Gethsemane. But without actual experience it is quite impossible to conceive of the intensity of such struggles as are here indicated. (Eph. 6:12.) The base of the brain is seized as in a vise. INTERPRETATIONS OF SCRIPTURE, INGENIOUS BUT MISLEADING BEYOND DESCRIPTION, are projected into the mind as water might be projected through a hose. Visions may be tried, wonderful illuminations of the mind as by a soft but gloriously greenish or yellowish haze. Seducive suggestions may be made, based on circumstances of the environment. Offers of inspiration may be made. The privilege of sleep may be taken away for days at a stretch. All this is with the object of forcing the unfortunate into at least temporary insanity so as to destroy his influence and if possible, his faith in God. Failing in all other attempts, the mind may be flooded with thoughts that are vile beyond description. *Then remember the vow.* Scripture Studies, Vol. VII.

WICKED SPIRITS USE HUMAN AGENTS.

The evil ones use human agencies to attack members of the Body. We may reasonably expect that all of the Lord's servants who are actively engaged in the closing hours of the Harvest will be attacked through human agencies by these evil spirits. Time and again the enemy assaulted the reputation of our dear Brother Russell. He was taken away, however, before the evil spirits were permitted to exercise their full power. Now we may expect that all manner of charges and attacks will be made by them through human agencies against the reputation, character and standing of others who are engaged in the Harvest work, which will constitute a test to all the brethren, as to whether they will be governed by "Passion" (outside influence), or whether they will be governed by the "Principle" of God's Word. The more prominent position occupied by one in the Harvest work, the more venomous will be the attacks. *Let each one examine his own heart carefully and see to it that his own conclusions are based upon right principles, namely, the Word of God and not upon outside influenec. No other course is safe.*

HOW TO REPEL ATTACKS.

All the Scriptures bearing upon the point indicate that the conflict will be more severe as we near the end. Referring to this time St. Paul says, *"Finally,* my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might."—Ephesians, 6:10.

The clear inference here is that each soldier of the Cross must have special strength in order to stand *at this time,* and to repel the combined attack of Satan and his coadjutors. If we look at it from one standpoint, we would become dismayed and despair of winning, but looking at it from another viewpoint, we know that He who is for us is greater than all who can be against us; and He being for us, none can prevail against us. We are now in the Evil Day. How, then, may we have the strength needed? The Apostle tells us of the armor of God provided for us, which will prove invulnerable to all attacks of the Adversary. "Wherefore, take unto you *the whole armor* of God that ye may be able to withstand (resist) in the Evil Day, and having done all, to STAND FAST, (remain a victor)." Ephesians, 6:13. The assurance here is that he who has this armor on, keeps it on and learns to use it properly, will be able to stand.

While the Apostle used as an illustration the human warrior, clothed in the proper and complete accoutrements of war, yet he did not mean that the Christian needs this kind of armor. The armor of the Lord is for the New Creature because his warfare is not carnal warfare, but a spiritual warfare. 2 Corinthians, 10:4, 5.

WHAT IS THE ARMOR?

God is the maker of this armor through human instrumentalities. The armor consists of His Word, the Message of Truth, put into proper shape to be used for the benefit of the New Creation. Describing this armor in detail, the Apostle says:

"Having your loins girt about with the truth." The girdle is a symbol of servitude, and suggests that no one is safe at this time unless he is a servant of *the Truth.* Those engaged in evil surmising, fault-finding, back-biting, slander, libel or other works of darkness are not servants of the Truth. On the contrary, let each one of us see to it that he guards himself against such wiles of the Adversary, and that he possesses the zeal peculiar to the House of the Lord and earnestly and zealously follows in the Master's footsteps by serving His Cause at this time.

"And having on the breastplate of righteousness." The breastplate was used to cover the vital organs of the body, particularly the heart. A proper condition of heart is vital to the New Creature. A righteous heart indicates purity, righteous motives, righteousness of character. "Keep thine heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Matt. 5:8.) "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him." 2 Chronicles, 16:9.

"And your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace." The soldier who engages in warfare must keep well his feet. If they are not shod they become sore, his attention is directed more to the soreness than to his duties. The New Creature has now many rough roads to travel. Therefore the Feet members should be clothed with the message of peace and see to it that all anger, malice, hatred and strife, ill-will, back-biting, fault-finding, accusations of the brethren be put aside. *None other will be able to stand.* "Follow peace with all, men and holiness, without which no man shall see the LORD." (Heb. 12:14.) Those who hunt trouble now will surely find it; they will find little else. Those who avoid trouble find it necessary to be diligent in keeping themselves in the peace and love of God.

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." Eph. 6:16. The enemy is constantly firing wicked darts at the soldiers of the Cross. These darts are liable to stir up in your mind doubts, fears, skepticism. The shield of faith is the protection. FAITH MEANS THE INTELLECTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION OF THE WORD OF GOD—TRUE PRINCIPLES—and a confident reliance upon that word. "Without *faith* it is impossible to please God." "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." Heb. 11:6. 1 John 5:4.

"And take the helmet of salvation." The helmet fitted over the head and represents the intellectual understanding and appreciation of the Divine Plan. This knowledge of God's Word, and His methods and His information concerning the methods of the Adversary, is absolutely essential in order to protect ourselves against the evil ones of this day. If we had no knowledge of the demons and their methods of attack, we could not be forearmed against them.

"And the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." This is both an offensive and a defensive weapon. We must have it and know how to use it. Jesus wielded it successfully to each attack made upon Him. He said, *"It is written,"* and such must be *our battle cry.* We are not to use carnal weapons, nor such weapons as Satan uses. We are to use the Truth and let the Truth do the cutting.

It is noticed that the Apostle names only six parts of the armor, whereas the armor of the ancient soldier was in seven parts. Seven is also a symbol of perfection. The seventh part, the one not named by the Apostle, was the greaves, and was a metal shield fitting over the front part of the foot to protect it from darts of the adversary. The Feet members of the Church are now engaged in the fight. The greaves, therefore, would properly and fittingly represent the Vow. When it was promulgated our attention was called to this Scripture: "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Isaiah 59:19.

HOW TO PUT ON THE ARMOR.

The words of the Apostle assume that the persons addressed have renounced the world and enlisted under the banner of the Lord by making a full surrender of their will to do God's will. Hence he says by illustration:

(1) *Girdle*—Servitude. Be a zealous and faithful servant of the Truth. Let there be but one motive for service—love for God and His righteous cause. "By love serve."

(2) *Breastplate*—Righteousness. Having on the robe of Christ's righteousness now, study to be approved of God. Learn the great and vital principles of His Word and apply them to daily living; be controlled by these and let them work out in you a righteous character. *Keep a pure heart.*

(3) *Sandals*—Peace. Do not hunt trouble. Live in peace with all SO LONG AS GOD'S LAW ("PRINCIPLES") IS NOT SACRIFICED. Accept your part of suffering with joy.

(4) *Shield*—Faith. Maintain an abiding faith in God and in His sure Word of Promise. *Rely upon His Word and not upon the advice or influence of others.* Stand (fast), leaning only on the Lord.

(5) *Helmet*—Salvation. Strive to increase in heart appreciation of God and the Lord Jesus. Continue in the study of the Word. Feed upon the food provided. Keep always before your mind the strong hope of salvation and the high position to which you have been called.

(6) *Sword*—Word of God. Know God's Word, in letter and spirit. Be able to give a reason for the hope you have. Use it deftly in repelling the adversaries. Let your battle cry be, "It is written."

(7) *Vow.* Daily put in practice the Vow in letter and spirit. Take the Lord Jesus with you in all things. Be filled with His Spirit.

If you do these things you shall be strong in the Lord and have the power which His supreme strength imparts and shall be a certain victor.

THE FINAL CONFLICT OF THE "EVIL DAY."

This is the Evil Day; the time when every man's work is being tried in the fiery furnace; these are perilous times of which we have been warned; it is the last battle, the great and final conflict. The enemy is advancing from every quarter. Shall we quail before our adversaries? No, thank God, for He has made ample provision for His people. The whole armor of God is now supplied. It was never so much needed as now. Those who have it on and keep it on will stand (Fast). OTHERS WILL NOT.

Let us not be discouraged, dear soldiers of the Cross; let us arise to the importance of the time and face the perils of the hour with confidence in our Commander and Lord. The history of Ages is looking down upon us. The holy angels of Heaven are beholding the final conflict. Jesus and the members of the Bride who have passed beyond the veil are watching our course, how we are quitting ourselves. It is the greatest battle of the Ages, and the enemy is making his final onslaught. God's little band of soldiers, now clothed with the complete armor of the Lord, are marshalled for the last time upon the battlefield. We hear the encouraging words of our Captain, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the Crown of life!" Soon this army will emerge from the smoke of battle, clothed in wreaths of victory. Soon it will be asked, "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" (Canticles 6:10.) Soon the answer from Heaven shall ring out, "This is triumphant Zion, whose great Leader has forever put to flight the army of darkness." She is pure, just, holy, good, and now stands in the glorious light of Heaven with her glorious Captain. Terrible has been The Christ, and will continue to be, in the conquest of evil. The dawn of His glorious Reign is here, the new Government is now to be put in operation. Soon all men will have full opportunity to stand in the light of Truth and be able by the grace of the Lord to free themselves from all the influences of evil and darkness. Be brave, be valiant soldiers, now! Z. '17, 275-279.

KERNELS

The Narrow Way remains narrow unto the end of the journey. Z. '14:313.

"The Apostle tells us that the ox knoweth its owner and the ass his master's crib—although brute beasts they learn where to go for their nourishment. The same is true of barnyard fowls and all domestic animals—they not only have an appetite for food but soon learn the incidents connected with their feeding. The Lord seems to intimate that some of his people are less wise in these respects than are the dumb animals—THEY FORGET HOW, WHEN AND WHERE THEY GOT THEIR PREVIOUS FOOD. This is not true, however, of the Lord's flock. The true sheep know the green pastures and still waters and the Shepherd's voice, and a stranger will they not follow because they recognize not the voice of strangers—'My sheep hear my voice and they follow me'." Z. '06:168.

"Let us remember that we are to hear the Lord and His chosen mouthpieces rather than to follow our own imaginations or the imaginations of other uninspired men. We may accept assistance from anyone able to give it, but we are to scrutinize every helping hand and every voice to know that it is of the Lord and leads us to him and is in accord with his instructions. 'My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me. A stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of a stranger'."—John 10:5. Z. '04:105.

"In following in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus, we are not to *murmur* by the way, finding fault with its difficulties and its NARROWNESS." Z. '16:56.

"The Church of Christ, the watching ones, are now in a particular time of waiting. THE ELIJAH CLASS IS SOON TO BE TAKEN BEYOND THE VEIL. THE ELISHA CLASS WILL BE LEFT until later, to wash their soiled robes in the blood of the Lamb in the 'Great Tribulation' just before the world. It seems that the Lord is now especially testing His people. Among many of the people of God love has waxed cold, because unrighteousness is abounding everywhere." Z. '16:58.

"Observe that, when this night cometh when reapers *must* cease their labors, it will prove that this final work of the Gospel age is accomplished; that the elect number of the Bride of Christ have all been 'sealed,' and 'gathered' into a condition of separateness from the worldly—into the barn condition (Matt. 13:30); for GOD WILL NOT PERMIT ANYTHING TO PUT AN END TO HIS WORK UNTIL IT IS FINISHED. Then, all the true and faithful servants of God will have been sealed in their foreheads; and, the word of the Gospel age being finished, no more can enter into that work or reap its rich reward, foretold in the 'exceeding great and precious promises' as the reward of the faithful who enter while the 'door' is open." 2 Pet. 1:4. C. 211, 212.

"The type in the Old Testament mentioned by the Apostle Paul, that of Esau, who for a mess of pottage sold his birthright. Foolish as was that transaction, it was only a type; much more foolish is it for those who are now having the opportunity by the Lord's grace of becoming joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus, in the glory, honor and immortality of the Kingdom, to lose all these privileges and advantages and favors—to trade them, as it were, for a mess of pottage—for a more favorable condition in this present life." Z. '04:94.

"The Lord will not permit those who receive the Truth in the love of it to be turned aside. But He will send strong delusions to those who receive it from any other motive or for any other reason. These strong delusions He will permit to be spread abroad because He purposes to demonstrate the real heart attitude of each of those who have named His name and taken His vows upon them. Thus the loyal-hearted ones will be made manifest, and of them He declares, 'They shall be mine, . . . in that Day when I make up My jewels'." Mal. 3:17. Z. '15:342.

"The journey of the consecrated has not been one strewn with flowers. It has not been one of ease. God permitted it to be otherwise, in order that by trying experiences a strong, firm, crystalized character might be developed. The last of the feet members have come to a very trying time in the Church's history. Poor, bruised and despised ones; misunderstood by all in the world, persecuted, ridiculed, the victims of scoffers, charged as violators of the law and denounced as the offscourings of the earth. And yet they have pressed along and are still pressing along the narrow way! No one appreciates them; indeed, none except the consecrated can appreciate them. But how beautiful they are and how wonderful their privilege! They are highly honored and esteemed by the Lord himself and greatly loved by him—not because of their own merit, but because of faithful, loving devotion to duty and to its cause." Z. '18:135.

"To yield to the spirit of the world, to allow its sentiments to dominate us for the sake of its peace, would be giving evidence of an inferior appreciation of the Lord, his Truth and the privileges of his service. The result would be that if we did not lose everything by going completely over to worldliness we might, at least, lose the prize, and have a portion with the 'Great Company,' and come up through great tribulation to an inferior place in connection with the glories to follows." F. 606.

"'Whosoever will live godly shall suffer persecution,' is the Apostle's declaration; and whosoever has not shared it has every reason to doubt his relationship to God as a son . (Heb. 12:8). And so with the Church as a whole, when not persecuted by the Ishmael and Esau class, it has been because there was so much of the spirit of the world or so much of 'cold love' toward the Lord and his truth that they were not worthy of persecution. But judged by this same standard, and by our Lord's prophecy, there have been some faithful unto death all the way down through this Gospel age. —a 'little flock'." D. 567.

"The proper course for all those who come into Christ is to inquire for and search out 'the old paths'—the footsteps of Jesus and the Apostles, their teachings, their practices—and not to be influenced by modern digressions." Z. '15:24.

"To allow error to creep in and to be promulgated, taught in the Church, would be a serious sin and show unfaithfulness on the part of those who had pledged themselves as soldiers of the cross to defend it." Z. '07:180.

WHY THOUSANDS ARE FALLING.

"This is the time long foretold, when 'a thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at they right hand.' Why will all these fall? Because they have neglected this necessary development of character; because they have failed to put on the whole armor of God; because under the delusions of the Adversary and the spirit of the world and of Babylon they have become twisted in their minds." Z. '15:134.

THE VALUE OF POSITIVE DECISION.

"One thing here is worthy of note; namely, the positiveness with which Ruth made her decision. It was not a proposal to try for a time how it would go to live in Judea. It was a decision unto death. In this respect all true conversions are alike. The Christian, for instance, did not really become a Christian until he made just such a definite, positive consecration of himself to LEAVE THE WORLD, ITS AFFAIRS, ITS LOVES, ITS HOPES AND AMBITIONS, and to spend and be spent even unto death in the service of the Lord. The value of positive decision in respect to life we can hardly overestimate. Thousands of lives are blighted because of lack of decision. Positiveness for God is the only condition in which we can hope to 'make our calling and election sure'." Z. '15:23.

"St. Peter wrote of the followers of Jesus—the consecrated Church: 'Ye are a Royal Priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people (a people for a purpose, Diaglott), that ye should show forth the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.' (1 Peter 2:9). This New Nation—God's nation—is in the world, but not of it. Its members cannot be loyal to the prince of this world, and to the Prince of Glory, both. They must choose between the two. This will make them 'peculiar' in the eyes of the majority of people, who do not understand the matter." Z. '16:6.

"Courage is always admirable, but there is a moral courage which should rank higher far than physical. This moral courage is greatly needed amongst the Lord's people; without it they can do nothing, and many of their difficulties in the Christian way are because they fail to appreciate this matter and fail to develop this courage. It requires real courage of the highest order to stand for the Lord's Truth and his people when these are misunderstood, misrepresented, antagonized. It takes real courage to stand for the light when the great Adversary with a world-wide influence brands it as darkness and leads an assault against it. It requires real courage to denounce the darkness, meekly, persistently, when it has on its side wealth, culture, influence and Churchianity." Z. '07:283.

"This injunction of our Lord, to 'remember Lot's wife,' also applies particularly to the Lord's people who have heard His call of the present time to 'come out' of Babylon, and have left this condemned 'city.' Whoever, therefore, is being led of the Lord's angels (messengers) to a place of safety ere the foretold destruction overtakes the present Order, as were Lot and his family before the destruction of Sodom, LET HIM NOT LOOK BACK OR OTHERWISE MANIFEST SYMPATHY WITH THAT WHICH IS CONDEMNED OF THE LORD TO OVERTHROW AND DESTRUCTION." Z. '16:262.

"We should remember that in order to become of the Kingdom class which is to have the rulership of earth for a thousand years, we must be separate from the aims, ambitions and policy of the present order. One of the essentials is that we recognize the vast difference between the present order of things and the New Order now at hand, and that we take our stand accordingly." Z. '16:72.

"We deem it appropriate to call attention here to the final warning and admonition given to the Church by that 'Faithful and wise Servant,' published in the November 1, 1916, Watch Tower. This warning from Brother Russell seems to indicate that after his decease special trials would come to the Church. Since his death his words appear even more striking and appropriate than while he was among us. We quote them as follows:

"So far as we are able to judge, the same conditions *prevail today* among Bible Students which the Apostle pointed out to the elders of the Church at Ephesus when he charged them, saying, 'Take, therefore, heed unto yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with the blood of His own' (Son).—Acts 20:28. Diaglott.

"St. Paul's prophecy came true: 'After my departure shall grevious wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock; also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to *draw away disciples after them. Therefore, watch, and remember* that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears; and now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His Grace'."

"WE COMMEND A CAREFUL REREADING OF THAT ENTIRE ARTICLE, ENTITLED 'THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION'." Z. '16, page 327.

A LITTLE WHILE.

A little while, our fightings will be over;
  A little while, our tears be wiped away;
A little while, the power of Jehovah
  Will turn our darkness into heaven's bright day.

A little while, the fears that oft surround us
  Will to the memories of the past belong;
A little while, the love that sought and found us
  Will change our weeping into heaven's glad song.

A little while! 'Tis ever drawing nearer—
  The brighter dawning of that glorious day.
Blest Savior, make our spirits' vision clearer,
  And guide, Oh! guide us in the shining way.

A little while, O blessed expectation!
  For strength to run with patience, Lord, we cry.
Our hearts up leap in fond anticipation:
  Our union with the Bridegroom draweth nigh.

"MY BLESSED PORTION."

Though all the world my choice deride,
  Yet Jesus shall my portion be;
For I am pleased with none beside;
  The fairest of the fair is he.

Sweet is the vision of thy face,
  And kindness over thy lips is shed;
Lovely art thou, and full of grace,
  And glory beams around they head.

Thy sufferings I embrace with thee,
  Thy poverty and shameful cross;
The pleasures of the world I flee,
  And deem its treasures only dross.

Be daily dearer to my heart,
  And ever let me feel thee near;
Then willingly with all I'd part,
  Nor count it worthy of a tear.

INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR BRETHREN:

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you in the name of our Redeemer and Saviour.

With much joy in my heart I take this opportunity of acknowledging the kind letter you sent me, which is an answer to my prayers.

And I pray the Dear Lord may grant you the necessary wisdom that you may be used through Him to strengthen others of like Precious Faith.

Your loving brother in the Lord, R. J. L.—Canada.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:

Only last Sunday, January 19, a copy of your Preamble and Resolutions adopted by joint session of Bible Students now standing, was handed me, by my request, also copy of "Old Corn Gems" of January 6th. After reading carefully their contents I was sure there was not one thing that could be justly criticised or condemned. Though I had just heard the class warned in such a peculiar way regarding letters from other classes where divisions are going on, and telling them how dangerous it was to just listen and imbibe anything from them at all.

I have heard for some time regarding these divisions up North. and often thought to write Brother Heard or Brother Hadley and urge them to stand firm but not to leave the class. I could not see any good in leaving the brethren and as I have always stood fast to the points regarding the sealing, ending of the harvest, etc., I did not see many other points regarding our responsibility to hearing error preached and condoning wrong principles.

Wednesday morning Brother A. A. Yerex called on me and very soon convinced me that we few here are not so wide awake as I had thought, and that we need help from you as quickly as we can have it, instead of our sending advice up North. I called on the friends here, about 20 in all, and we had a grand time listening to our dear Brother Yerex. At least I did. There may perhaps be a dozen of us who will respond heartily to your stand, *our* stand.

Please send us more "Old Corn Gems" but above all we need some of the Lord's dear comforters. I was the only Elder here that stood out against the turn of affairs, and I am not talented—there is not much talent here among us—but I believe our hearts are right and loyal to the Lord and His Truth. What we need is for some good brother to be with us several days and stir us up and get us thoroughly awake to our position.

With Christian love and greetings in the name of the dear Lord to you and all the dear Brethren everywhere and in your vicinity. I anxiously await the Lord's answer.

Your Brother by His grace, C. D. McC.—Calif.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:

Received "Old Corn Gems" Nos. 1 and 2 and after reading same I see I must make haste and reply, as I can assure you I do not wish to miss any of them.

I truly appreciate the work you are doing and trust it will be the means of helping many others to stand in this evil day. I saw clearly when the time came for the separation between the Elijah Class and all others and when the Harvest was ended.

Am also thankful for the visits of the Brethren sent out by the Association. I am sure you will all receive great blessings from the Lord in the effort you are putting forth to serve others.

Hoping to receive further copies of "Old Corn Gems" or anything else that will be of help along the Narrow Way, I am, with Christian love, your sister in Christ, J. D. B.—Canada.

EXTRACT FROM BROTHER WISDOM'S LETTER RE-MILWAUKEE CONVENTION.

Kansas City, Mo., Feb. 11, 1919.

Referring to my former report regarding the Minneapolis Convention, would say that the Milwaukee Convention was even more wonderful in its results. In both places the opposition was very strong and in some respects even bitter, and in both God gave the victory. It was a glorious victory too. Brother Heard and the writer particularly, have been walking on air ever since. During the three-days' Convention every whit of opposition gave way to the heartiest approval. I never saw so much tenderness, so many tears and such joy as marked the close of the Convention. It was wonderful beyond expression. It looks like a nice class of about 25 or 30 where but four were standing fast.

DEAR BRETHREN:

Loving greetings in the name of our Dear Lord and Redeemer.

I am a little slow in getting in my request for the regular visits of these "Old Corn Gems," but never-the-less I want it.

I attended the Convention at Minneapolis and the Lord's spirit was certainly shown there if it ever was. At first, as Brother Heard said, they were a little timid and shy and their faces were long, but before it was over their faces were long the broad way.

I can certainly endorse every word they said and also what is in the "Old Corn Gems," as Brother Russell's teachings. I am so thankful for this help in getting my mind out of this confusion. We don't have any idea how much we do have to be thankful for. We would be pleased to have a visit from any of the pilgrims at any time.

There are only four in our class here and as far as I know they are all in harmony with the "Old Corn Gems" and its teachings. It is a very hard step to take to give up our dear "Towers," where *we have been getting our spiritual food so abundantly*, but we want to do the Lord's will only, come what may.

Thankng you many, many times for this blessed message. My prayers are for you all daily at the Throne of Heavenly Grace that you may all be over-comers. So may we always trust in our Dear Lord.

With Chrstian love. Sister W. L. C., Sec'y.—Minn.

DEAR BRETHREN:

Just a line to say keep right on sending the "Old Corn Gems" along. We can't do without them. Just send one set instead of two, we can both read the one.

May the Lord bless you in your efforts to cheer us up at these times. We are very thankful to the Lord for you. Am sending ——— to help pay expenses.

Your loving brother and sister by Divine Grace,

K. and M. B.—Canada.

DEAR BRETHREN:

Greetings in the Lord's name.

We just had dear Brother Yerex with us here. And now I am writing you to mail us some "Old Corn Gems," about eight copies. You can mail them in one package to us and we will hand them out to our little class.

Yours in the Lord's service, O. A. O.—Iowa.

STAND FAST PRINCIPLES

The Great Master warned that, straight is the gate and narrow the way that leads unto life and that few would ever find it; and experience shows that fewer are disposed to walk therein after they do find it, for it is too narrow—it is the way of self-denial and SELF-SACRIFICE. It is the way our Lord walked in loneliness; and we are called to walk in His footsteps. No one can "STAND FAST" without so doing.

PRINCIPLE is defined as a "fixed rule of action." "STAND FAST BIBLE STUDENTS" therefore are "firm, unmovable, knowing that their toil is not unfruitful in the Lord." These prayerfully and conscientiously observe the Principles laid down by our Lord and confirmed by His Apostles. Their teachings form the "rule of action" of their daily lives. From these they steadfastly refuse to turn, come what may, ever bearing in mind that ONE is their Master and Him they would obey, whatever the cost. They know no other Master and use only the Liberty that comes from Him, their Head. Observance of such Principles of necessity leads to carefulness of conduct and to examination of motives, which are the mainspring of actions.

Therefore the teachings of the Lord and His Apostles, the CHANNEL of all Divine Truth, become their inspiration, their comfort and the source of their strength and consolation. Likewise all those of the "NARROW WAY" are careful to note and follow the precepts and practices of "THAT FAITHFUL SERVANT." Upon these they place consistent construction, and from the same they will not deflect; though others waver, they will not, they Stand Fast, but never use their liberty for a cloak.

Knowing their God, "Stand Fast Bible Students" consequently honor their Head by hearty obedience to His commandments. They would lift the "Royal Banner" high, that the poor world, through their lives, their courage and their loyalty, MIGHT SEE their Lord and Saviour.

The Principles for which these are so resolutely standing, are those set forth in the Scriptures, and so fearlessly, vigorously and uniformly advocated by "That Faithful Servant," and until the summer of 1918 were held to by all the adherents of the I. B. S. A., which has become now but a name for another Babylonish Sect.

Hence "STAND FAST BIBLE STUDENTS" are different.

OLD CORN GEMS

"Stand Fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. . . . . . . "

SEMI-MONTHLY
March 1, 1919

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HOLD FAST AT THE MARK

LET NO MAN TAKE THY CROWN.

"Hold fast that which thou hast; let no man take thy crown," seems logically to refer specially to those who have reached the mark or standard of perfect love, and not merely to those who have taken the first step of consecration, entrance into the school of Christ. The words, "Hold fast that which thou hast," implies a previous effort and attainment, and that the attainment has had something to do with the *right* to the crown; and that the position attained must be *held* if the crown would be ultimately possessed. The intimation is also clear that the holding fast will be at the cost of a severe struggle.

This may be a new and somewhat startling thought to some who have erroneously supposed either that consecration alone was necessary, or that to attain the mark or standard of perfect love would end the struggle. Apparently, the severest struggles, tests, temptations, assail those that are *at that mark*, and this is in accord with our Master's promise that we shall "not be tempted above that we are able to bear." The stalwarts at the mark should be able to bear most and they will be most severely tried. Mark the exhortations to these, "Watch ye, stand fast, quit you like men." No longer "babes in Christ," "no longer children," their special test is as men, strong in the Lord panoplied in the whole armour of God. Hearken again to the words "Having done all, stand!" These words do not fit one entering the school or entering the race; they are most appropriate to those who have reached the standard of perfect love. Those who have "done all," who have attained the mark of character and "put on the whole armor," are the ones who are cautioned, warned, to "hold fast" and "stand fast" and "fight a good fight."

WHO SHALL BE ABLE TO STAND.

These fundamental truths have been true and applicable to the Lord's people throughout this Gospel Age, and hence the *narrowness of the way* and the few there be who have found and walked therein—in all a little flock. But now, more particularly than ever before, this warning applies, ... so many scriptures seem to specify our time in connection with these warnings. For instance, we read "Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye be able to stand in *the evil day*, and having done to stand"! Eph. 6:13. Z. '08, 88.

SUGGESTIONS

"OLD CORN GEMS" No. 3 printed certain "meat in due season" about the Elijah and Elisha types to expose the errors now being preached by messengers of NEW LIGHT on that subject. In this issue the article "Them that Honor Me I will Honor" will refresh the minds of the saints as to what Brother Russell taught regarding the antitype of "Joseph and his brethren." A careful reading of which will help to dispel the NEW LIGHT and bring you back to the *clear light* of the gospel as preached by that "wise and faithful Servant."

The announcement of the exact time and date of our coming Memorial Season will be made in the March 15th issue of OLD CORN GEMS, which we trust will reach all the dear friends in plenty of time to make all necessary arrangements.

STAND FAST BIBLE STUDENTS' CONVENTIONS.

Washington, D. C., March 13-16—four-day session.

Tentative plans are under way for a three-day Convention at Dallas, Texas, March 14-16; Los Angeles, Cal., March 28-30; Portland, Ore., April 4-6, and Victoria, B. C., just before Memorial.

We hope to be able to make more definite announcement in the March 15th issue of OLD CORN GEMS.

My frail barque rudely tosses on the sea,
In terror, Lord, I feebly cry to Thee,
"Increase my faith, or darker grows the night,
Oh, make me strong in Thee and in Thy might!"
He hears my prayer, He answers, with a smile,
"We're almost home, have faith a little while!"

Nor sun, nor moon, nor any star is seen,
Not e'en the faintest rift of blue between;
The chilling waters deeper, darker flow,
The storm-clouds lower, the winds more wildly blow—
Yet hark! Above the strife His voice, so mild,
"Be brave, be strong, we're almost home, my child!"

PUBLISHED BY
The Stand Fast Bible Students, under the supervision of members of a committee of seven. F. McKercher, Chairman, Box 939, Portland, Oregon.

IS IT RIGHT TO JUDGE?

Bible Students who are holding fast to the principles taught by Brother Russell, are often times accused of *judging* those, who once saw "eye to eye" with them, but, who now prefer a "way" which has a broader outlook. Stand Fast Bible Students have no desire to judge the hearts of those who oppose them, but if they did not judge the conduct and teachings of such, they would, indeed, be remiss in their duty as Christians. The following extracts are from the pen of the Laodicean Servant:

> "Judge nothing before the time . . . . now in this day of the Lord's presence when the magnet of Divine Truth makes manifest those who have and those who have not an affinity for it . . . . it becomes our duty as well as our privilege, to judge who is on the Lord's side and who is against Him . . . . Everything is being dragged to the light, whether men are willing or not; for every hidden thing must be revealed. And not only the hidden things of creeds and systems of error and iniquity, but also the hidden things of individual character. Luke 12:2, 3."
>
> "Among those who we fellowship it is our duty to judge as to whether they are still faithful (2 John 10:11). Here is a responsibility with reference to our endorsement of another which we cannot ignore and still be faithful; and except we judge of ones course by his fidelity or infidelity to the Truth, we shall be endorsing error quite as often as Truth. It is our privilege to know the Truth and to hold it firmly and to be faithful to it to the end, and if we so abide and walk in the light we will quickly know when one has turned away from the light into darkness." Z. '11:120.

In this article we are told of one way in which we shall know those who are "turning away" they "are advanced by the adversary as teachers angels or messengers of NEW LIGHT."

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER FOUR

"They did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover—and the manna ceased—neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit (OLD CORN) of the land of Canaan (during) that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL. Z. '18:51.

What Brother Russell Said About

JUDGING

"UNTIL THE LORD COME"

"Therefore, judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God." (1 *Cor.* 4:5.)

The teaching of the Apostle here is parallel to that of our Lord in his parable of the wheat and the tares. (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43.) When the zealous servant in the parable inquired, "Wilt thou then that we go and gather them (the tares) up?" the Lord answered, "Nay, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together *until the Harvest;* and in the time of the Harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn."

All through the Gospel Age the wheat and the tares have grown together, and only the Lord, who could read the hearts, could distinguish between them with unerring precision. But both the Lord and the Apostle, in the above Scriptures, indicate a difference in the time of Harvest, and show that it will then be possible for the faithful saints to judge also. With this thought in view, they are told to "judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come."

THE DAY OF THE LORD HAS COME.

And now the day of the Lord has come, we are now living in the days of the *parousia* (presence) of the Son of Man—"the Lord of the Harvest," "having on his head a golden crown (Divine authority) and in his hand (in his power) a sharp sickle"—the sickle of "present truth," the clear unfolding of the "Word of God (which) is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword—and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. 4; 12; Matt. 9:38; Rev. 14:14.)

UNTIL THE LORD COME.

And he is sending forth such "laborers," "angels" or "messengers" into his harvest as he sent forth into the harvest of the Jewish Age, viz., his consecrated and faithful disciples, bearing the Harvest message—the now fully revealed Plan of God and its appointed times and seasons.

The truth thus sent forth is doing its appointed work. Like a magnet, it gathers to itself all who have an affinity for it. Thrust it in wherever you will, it will invariably accomplish its work of finding the loyal and faithful. And we can readily judge, from this affinity for the magnet, who are at heart true and loyal and faithful to the Lord. "My sheep hear my voice," said the Master, "and I know them and they follow me; . . . for they *know* my voice (they are able to recognize his voice of Truth;) and a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers." (John 10:27, 4, 5.) Again he says, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; *the Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.*" John 12:48.

THE TRUTH IS DOING ITS SEPARATING WORK.

Thus, in this last day, the Harvest of the Age, this day of the Lord's invisible presence in the world, the Truth concerning the Divine plan, which he has been revealing since 1874, and which is now being widely testified for the sealing of the elect, is doing its separating work; and the saints, who understand the present situation, and watch with interest the progress of the harvest work, can see clearly where the lines of judgment are drawn between the faithful and the unfaithful. And often with astonishment they mark the divisions which the Truth makes when some prominent church-member, whom they had always judged to be faithful and true, manifests no affinity for the Truth, but turns from it and hugs the error more tightly than ever; or, when some other one, touched by the power of the Truth awakes to earnest self-sacrifice in its service.

"Judge nothing before the time." How could we have judged before this time as to whose hearts were loyal and true? But now, in this day of the Lord's presence, when the magnet of Divine Truth makes manifest those who have and those who have not an affinity for it—those who refuse to recognize the voice of the "Good Shepherd," and will not follow his leading, and who flee not from the voice of strangers, but hearken to and follow them—it *becomes our duty, as well as our privilege, to judge who is on the Lord's side and who is against him;* for says the Master, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Matt. 12:30.

JUDGE NOTHING UNTIL THE LORD COME.

"Judge nothing *before* the time, until the Lord come," but then let your spiritual senses be exercised in observing and marking the heretofore hidden things which the Truth, in its effects is bringing to light. See how it is bringing to light the hitherto covered deformities of the various creeds. Where is the intelligent Calvinist today who would not like to bury his creed sea deep, and forever hush this wrangle that has been exposing its deformity for a few years past? And where is the intelligent Armenian that is not trembling lest his turn may come next?

Everything is being dragged to the light, whether men are willing or not; for every hidden thing must be revealed. *And not only the hidden things of creeds and systems of error and iniquity, but also the hidden things of individual character*"; "for there is *nothing* covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid that shall not be known. Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closests shall be proclaimed upon the housetops. Luke 12:2, 3.

Ah! it is the day of reckoning with the Church, and "the Lord hath a controversy with his people." And this controversy, this reckoning, *is not merely with the Church-nominal* in its great sectarian branches; but in a special sense it is with those who have escaped from the bondage of error and sectarianism, and who, because faithful to their consciences and the truths brought to their attention, have been served by the Master with "present truth" as "meat in due season" (Luke 12:37), and who have been permitted to enter into some of the "deep things" of God's Plan.

THE CHURCH'S JUDGMENT NOW—THE WORLD'S NOT YET HERE.

The world has not yet come into its judgment; its reckoning is yet future; but ours is now upon us. We, to whom the testimony of Divine Truth has been borne, before whose mental vision the whole Plan of God with all its specifiications has been spread out and carefully explained, now stand on trial, yea, under the final tests of that trial, which is either to prove or disprove our worthiness to enter into the promised reward of the faithful. Many, as predicted (Psa. 91:7) are proving unworthy and some will *stand (fast.)*

And among those whom we fellowship and bid God-speed as faithful brethren in Christ, *it is our duty to judge* as to whether they are still faithful when the magnet of Truth makes their judgment so manifest in this day of the Lord; for it is written (2 John 10:11), "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed, for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

Here is a responsibility with reference to our endorsement of another which we cannot ignore and still be faithful; and except we judge of one's course by his fidelity or infidelity to the Truth, we shall be endorsing error quite as often as Truth. It is our privilege to know the Truth and to hold it firmly and to be faithful to it to the end, and *if we so abide and walk in the light we will quickly know when one has turned away from the light into darkness,* and will be able to render wholesome counsel and warning to such, and to help those who still retain enough of the spirit of meekness to accept the proffered assistance.

But, if such a one still pursue the path of darkness and call it light, thus deceiving himself and others, we cannot further endorse him and be guiltless. To do so is to add our influence in some measure, at least, to the error and in opposition to the Truth, and thus we become partaker of his evil deeds.

IN THE LAST DAYS PERILOUS TIMES SHALL COME.

The necessity for this careful discrimination and jealous guarding of the Truth in these last days is very manifest, both from the warnings of the Scriptures and from observation of their fulfilment. "In the last days," says the Apostle "perilous times shall come." (2 Tim. 3:1). Why? Because the Prince of darkness will make every possible effort to retain his power and dominion; and ignorance, error and superstition are his strong holds He first used all his power to keep men in ignorance and to foster superstition. But now God's due time has come for knowledge to be increased (Dan. 12:4) and the Millennial dawn is breaking; and not only the Church but the world is now waking up and beginning to think.

So the policy of Satan at present is to devise plausible counterfeits of the Truth, whereby to entrap and mislead those who have been making progress in the knowledge of the Divine Plan. As, in the beginning of our Lord's ministry at his first advent, Satan's efforts were concentrated upon the one object of causing him to stumble, thereby to nip the Divine Plan in the bud; and as during the Gospel Age the consecrated members of the Body of Christ have been specially opposed and beset by him, so now his efforts are concentrated specially upon the last members of that body, "the Feet of him," who are running the race for the prize of the high calling. It is for this cause that so many new and plausible forms of error (new light) have been brought forward within this Harvest period.

SATAN USING EVERY EFFORT TO STUMBLE THE FEET OF HIM THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE.

Satan is using every effort to thwart God's Plan and to stumble the Feet. And God even more than permits this; he encouages it by *sending* these strong delusions of Satan among his professed followers — at the same time assuring all who at heart are faithful to his Word and to their covenant of self-sacrifice that they need fear no evil, for he will be with them and uphold them though a thousand fall at their side.

One after another the deluded ones who have fallen into the various snares set for their feet have become active advocates of the several causes they have espoused since they departed from the Truth and are *advanced by the Adversary as teachers, angels or messengers of NEW LIGHT. They never seem to realize that they have gone into darkness, but imagine they have made great strides of progress in the light.* This is because they have been *overcome by the strong delusions of this evil day.*

THE STRONG DELUSIONS SHALL CAUSE THE UNWORTHY TO BELIEVE THE UNTRUTH.

However, none are ever permitted to be thus overcome who have not in some way been unfaithful to the Truth and hence unworthy of it. Upon all such God has said he would send the strong delusion, so that they shall believe a lie. *The Truth being designed for those only who are worthy* *of it—the elect—all others are bound to lose it.* But it is impossible to deceive the "very elect." God will keep them by his mighty power because of their faithfulness and loyalty to him.

The Lord distinguishes between the nominally elect and the finally elect, and so should we. Not all who have accepted of the Redeemer's favor of justification from guilt, and have heard and accepted the high calling to joint-heirship with Christ in his Kingdom and glory, will attain that great prize. All such have entered the race as now the nominally elect, and all such are eligible to membership in the glorified Church as the finally elect; but in order to gain that prize they must fulfill the conditions specified when they entered the race—when they in Christ's name and merit made a covenant with God, to sacrifice themselves in his service. In no other way can they make their calling and *election* sure.

"LET HIM THAT THINKETH HE STANDETH TAKE HEED LEST HE FALL."

It is this nominally elect class that is being tried now; and God is now making manifest the secret counsels of the hearts of his people. He puts us all on guard, too, saying, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall;" and telling us to take heed that no man take our crown.

How great is the responsibility of our present position before God, the great Judge of all hearts! He has shown us special favor in revealing to us the wonders of his Plan and in setting before us the grand prize of our high calling. Thus far we were counted worthy of those favors and eligible to the prize of joint heirship with Christ. How worthy have we proved ourselves since receiving this knowledge? Have we received it with meekness and humility and with a gratitude which manifests itself in active service of the Truth—in proclaiming it to others and in defending it and standing by it nobly in the midst of all the reproaches hurled against it? *Have we refused to compromise the Truth to any extent to avoid its otherwise inevitable reproach?*

If we are not thus jealous for the Truth we are not worthy of it and one of the deceptions of this "evil day" will surely number us among its victims; for it is in this time of the Lord's presence that Satan is to work so mightily, with great power to deceive, with signs of success and with lying wonders of error. His various schemes will have great success, in comparison with which the success of the Truth will seem small; for with these, as with Gideon's band, it will be a time of sifting, and "who shall be able to *STAND?" (FAST)*.

But *let those who stand girt about with Divine Truth fear nothing;* the Lord is permitting these delusions that they may serve his own wise and benevolent purposes in the separating of the worthy from the unworthy, and for the manifestation of those who are at heart loyal to him and to his Truth. Z. '11; 120-122.

RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT AND CRITICISM

Question—How may we distinguish between *"righteous judgment"* and *"criticism"?*

Answer—The Lord says, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment," (John 7:24). St. Paul says, "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come." (1 Cor. 4:5.) The question then arises, What is "righteous judgment"? A righteous judgment is a *right decision.* But since we cannot read the heart, how can we render a right decision? The scriptures answer that we cannot read one another's hearts and therefore should not *attempt* to *judge them.*

If, then, we cannot judge each other's hearts, motives or intentions, what can we judge? The answer of Scripture is that we may judge each other's *conduct.* If we see one of the Lord's people doing something improper, we might say, "Dear Brother (or Sister) your conduct would seem to be contrary to the Word of God, and to be bringing forth bad fruitage." If that person should reply, "It does not seem to *me* that I am doing wrong," we must not judge or condemn that one's heart. But we should judge between good and evil conduct, and at the proper time and place call attention to the matter and leave it there.

There is a difference between judging the *heart,* which we have *no right* to do, and judging the *conduct,* which is *right* to do. But it does not always follow that our judgment of one another's conduct must always be right. We are all prone to make mistakes.

If we should come to a brother and say, "Dear Brother, your conduct seems to be wrong, but I am sure that you want to do right. Will you explain"? He may be able to show us that the fruitage was good when we thought it bad. We may have misunderstood the matter. We are not to condemn our brother, but to go directly to him and get his view. Then if we cannot agree, we should tell him how it seems to us, and ask him to judge his own heart. We can do no more. Z. '13, 159.

"WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM."

"We shall be like Him. O, how rich the promise!
What greater could our Father's love prepare?
Few are the words, and softly are they spoken,
But who shall tell the glories hidden there?

"We shall be like Him, for we'll have His nature,
He'll lift us up and with His glory bless;
He took our sin, O, wondrous condescension!
That He might cloth us in His righteousness.

"While now in gracious love He calls us brethern,
And we His spotless robe with gladness wear,
Faith grasps the promise of the glorious future—
We shall be like Him when He shall appear.

"O, what has earth our thirsting souls to offer,
Compared with that abundant life to come?
How poor its pleasures and how dim its splendour,
Beside the glory of the promised throne!"

HE KNOWS.

"He knows the way I take—
What matter, then, if dark it be,
Or rough, or hedged about—
His staff shall comfort me.

"And should His love withhold
What seems so near, so dear, so sweet,
I'll humbly take this thing
And lay it at His feet.

"How sweet to *know* He knows,
And cares, and holds me by the hand—
Will safely guide until
I reach the Heavenly Land!"

"In the footprints of the Savior,
We will daily strive to walk;
And the alien world's disfavor
Shall but send us to our Rock,
How its waters
Do refresh thy weary flock!"

PERILOUS TIMES AT HAND

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2 *Tim.* 3:1.

Realizing that we are now living in the very times referred to by the Apostle, some may inquire, How can this be? Are not these times, in comparison with times past, especially favorable to the prosperity of the Church? Time was when fire and sword and guillotine and rack were systematically employed to exterminate the true saints of God, when the Word of God was a book prohibited, and when the prison and the dungeon rewarded the faithful searching of the Scriptures. And is there not also more Truth due and understood now than formerly, as well as full liberty (if a man is pleased to exercise it) to believe and teach, either in private or in public, whatever he believes to be Truth?

Yes, such are the favorable conditions of our day. Never, in all the history of the Church, has there been a day of such privilege and blessing—such increase of knowledge and general intelligence, such facilities for the general diffusion of knowledge and such breadth of individual liberty—of conscience, of speech and of action—as today. The spirit of liberty is abroad in the earth, and though the wily enemies that once fettered and handcuffed and imprisoned it still live, and would fain imprison it as before, they regretfully realize that the soaring eagle is on the wing and may never be pinioned again. But hand in hand with all these advantages, strange to say, comes the Church's greatest peril. True, there is a little peril to physical life, or earthly property; but these, to the true saints, are of minor importance, for they count not their earthly life dear unto them if by any means they may attain the divine nature and glory to which they are called.

The peril of these times is to the spiritual nature of the saints and to their valuable inheritance in the exceeding great and precious promises of God, which are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus. Subtle influences are now at work seeking to dwarf and extinguish the spiritual life and to rob the saints of their glorious hope, to sap stealthily the very foundations of Christianity, and thus effectually to overthrow the whole superstructure of the Christian faith in the minds of many, causing them thus to stumble and lose their glorious inheritance as joint-heirs with Christ.

The present besetments, being of this subtle character, are the more calculated to delude and ensnare, so that if one allows himself to be for a moment off his guard, the agencies of the Adversary will gain an advantage and use it to entrap the unwary one. And God will permit such snares because only those who are loyal and faithful, and therefore ever watchful, are counted *worthy to escape* their strong delusion. "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Matt. 21:36.

MANNER OF APPROACH OF THESE TIMES.

The Apostle forwarns the Church, not only of the *certainty* of such perils, and of their character, but also of their manner of approach. On one occasion he said, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grevious wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. (Such were the great and destructive papal powers). Also *of your own selves* shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them." (Acts 20:29, 30.) Some of these Paul and the early Church encountered in their day.

Paul was often in peril among false brethren who, concerning the faith, had made shipwreck, and who greatly withstood his words—his efforts to build up the Church in the most holy faith. (2 Cor. 11:26; 1 Tim. 1:19; 2 Tim. 4:14-17.) And he shows that from such false brethren, brethren who have erred from the Truth and become teachers of false doctrine, will come the Church's greatest peril in these last times. (2 Tim. 2:16-18, 3:5.) And in order that we might recognize and beware of them, he very minutely described them, though the clear significance of the warning is somewhat beclouded by a faulty translation, which reads as follows:

"For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good; traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth."

The description as here translated, the reader will observe, in incongruous; for men of such villainous character could have no form of godliness. Read the description again and consider, How could a proud, covetous, boastful blasphemer, a truce-breaker, a false accuser, incontinent and fierce, a despiser of those that are good, a heady, high-minded, pleasure-loving traitor, have any form of godliness whatever, or deceive any one in this respect? Such a fierce character and bold blasphemer could not possibly palm himself off as a child of God; nor would he attempt it. The fact is that our translators did not fully comprehend the Apostle's language, and in rendering it into English they put the heaviest possible construction upon the Greek words, and thus the picture of these persons is overdrawn. Thus, for instance, the Greek word here rendered "blasphemers" (V. 3) is *blasphemous,* which signifies *one speaking injuriously,* or *an evil-speaker.*

Now, judging merely by the word, regardless of the context, we would not know whether in this instance the evil-speaking is carried to the extent of revilings or not; but as it stands related to the context—in view of the after statement that these have a form of godliness (V.5) though lacking its real power—we must conclude that those milder or more subtle forms of evil-speaking, which would be consistent with hypocritical forms of godliness, are referred to, and therefore that our English word *blaspheme,* though it means evil-speaking, is too strong a term by which here to translate the Greek word *blasphemos;* for the full and generally understood significance of the English word *blaspheme* is—"To speak of the Supreme Being in terms of impious irreverence, to revile or speak reproachfully of God, Christ or the holy Spirit—to speak wickedly of, to utter abuse or calumny against, to speak reproachfully of."—Webster.

So also the word *apeithes* rendered "disobedient," signifies *not persuaded;* and the expression "disobedient to parents" would consequently signify *not of the same persuasion,* or *not of the same mind as were the parents.* The word *anosios,* rendered "unholy," which signifies *unkind;* or *unholy,* would likewise, in view of the context be better rendered by the milder Enlgish term, *unkind.* The word *aspondos* rendered "truce-breakers" (V. 3) signifies *irreconcilable* or *implacable*—i. e., stubborn or constant in enmity. The word *akrates,* rendered "incontinent" signifies more properly, *without strength,* or *without self-control.* Though this thought is also in the English word "incontinent," a coarser meaning generally attaches to the word. The word *anemeros,* rendered "fierce" signifies *not mild, savage.* That is, it may be a great or a small lack of mildness, amounting in some cases to savage bitterness. But, again, the fierce or savage idea is not compatible with any pretentions to godliness, as intimated in verse 5. The word *aphilagathos,* rendered "despisers of those that are good" would thus be better rendered *not friendly to the good.*

Thus revised, the Apostle's language reads as follows: "For men shall be lovers of their own selves (selfish), covetous, boasters, proud, evil-speakers, not of the same mind as were their forefathers (i. e., *devisers of new doctrines*), unthankful, unkind, irreconcilable, false accusers, without self-control, not mild, not friendly to those that are good—traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God (i. e., preferring their own will or pleasure to the will or pleasure of God); having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth."

"MEN OF YOUR OWN SELVES SHALL ARISE SPEAKING PERVERSE THINGS."

It should be observed also that the word *men* in verse 2, is emphatic in the Greek text, as shown in the Emphatic Diaglott, thus indicating that a particular class of men is here referred to, which according to the description, can be none other than those mentioned in Acts 20:29, 30, viz., men *"of your own selves"* (men of your own company, men whom you have hitherto regarded as members of the Body of Christ, and who still claim to be such), who shall arise speaking perverse things (perverting the Truth).

Well may me inquire, as we realize that we are living in the last days here referred to, *is there such a class of enemies to the Truth and to the Church actually in existence today? Truly, the voice of prophecy has never set up a false alarm, or foretold an uncertain event. THE PERILOUS TIMES HAVE COME AND THE FORETOLD PERILS ARE ALL ABOUT US.* Side by side in the same communities with the humble, faithful, consecrated saints—in the same little assemblings together of those who have escaped from the bondage of Babylon, in the same households, and often at the same table of the Lord, there has also been developing a class who are "lovers of their own selves (selfish), covetous, (of honors and distinction and the praise of men—ambitious), boasters, (as though the credit of the Truth now due and received were in some way due to them, and as though they had a right therefore to alter and amend it at their pleasure), proud" (of that knowelge which should be received with only humility and thankfulness, and which can be retained only under these conditions).

Because the light of the newly unfolding Truth has dawned upon their pathway, they, in common with the faithful saints, no longer are of the same mind as were their parents; but the goodness of God thus manifested to them, instead of cultivating in them a spirit of thankfulness, and co-operation, which is its design, seems to arouse a spirit of pride and ambition, which does not long hesitate to make merchandise of the Truth for ambitious ends, however trivial and foolish those ends may be. And in pursuance of the ambitious policy, by degrees they become "evil speakers (against the doctrine of Christ and those who believe and teach it), unkind, unfriendly to those that are good (who hold fast the Truth in righteousness), and false accusers" (of such). As they proceed in this way they seem to lose all former strength of Christian character. They become irreconcilable to the Truth, so that neither Scripture, nor reason, nor the example of the faithful, has power to restore them. Loving their own wills more than the will of God, they grow more and more proud and boastful of their attainments—high-minded and heady. Not submitting themselves to the Head of the Body, Christ Jesus, they are ambitious to head new factions themselves, and thus they turn traitors to the Truth.

They claim, too, to be very earnest students of the Word of God; and so they are, but they never come to a knowledge of the Truth. They are after something new, some new (*NEW LIGHT*) and peculiar "find" in the mind of God that will attract the wondering gaze of many curious disciples. But, alas for their purposes! There are no such real curiosities in the blessed Word of God; but the zeal of these ambitious ones is equal to the emergency, and one after another the actual truths are beclouded, distorted and perverted to this ignoble end and presented as newly-found truths. And the *unwary receive them as such, not recognizing at first that they are subversive of the entire system of Divine Truth.* Thus their faith in the truths already learned is unwittingly undermined; they are caught in the snare of the Enemy; and as they continue to give ear to these seductive influences they become more and more entangled, until, having lost their anchorage, they find themselves adrift on the vast sea of unbelief, floating they know not whither. Like their leaders, they may retain the form of godliness, but have lost its power.

The studied effort of false teachers—false brethren developing in the very midst of the Church—is to offset the Truth by plausible forms of error, to unsettle confidence both in the Truth and in all teachers of the Truth, thus to lead away disciples after them and their theories. And in consequence of the allurements of these false teachers, and of the unfaithfulness of many to the love and service of the Truth, which they have received, a class in the midst of the Church will give much encouragement to the ambitions of these false brethren; "for," says the Apostle (2 Tim. 4:3, 4), "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own desires (desires for something new) shall they gather to themselves teachers, having itching ears (for new and strange things); and they shall turn away their ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

Nor will this class be only a small minority; for, in order that the faithful may not be discouraged when brought face to face with these things, they are forewarned (Psa. 91:7) that, before this conflict ends, a thousand shall fall at their side and ten thousand at their right hand. Thus, realizing that God foreknew it all and that the accomplishment of his glorious purposes is not in the least endangered thereby, they may still have confidence and joy in view of the glorious consummation of his Plan. and of their promised position in it.

"FROM SUCH TURN AWAY."

But how shall the faithful believers act towards these false brethren in their midst? Shall they take them by the hand, as formerly, and bid them God-speed? Shall they recognize them as brethren in Christ? Are they owned of God as sons? Shall we indeed walk with them and be guiltless? What does the Apostle say we shall do? He says, "From such *turn away.*" (2 Tim. 3:5.) "Be not ye partakers with them; for ye were formerly darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light . . . and have *no fellowship* with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather reprove them." (Eph. 5:6-11). And the Apostle John (2 John 11) emphasizes Paul's counsel, saying, "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed; for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

Such "evil men," says Paul (2 Tim. 3:13), "shall wax worse and worse (more and more bold and aggressive, as they receive encouragement from that *rapidly increasing class* who will no longer endure sound doctrine), deceiving (others) and being deceived" (themselves—becoming more firmly intrenched in the snares of their own weaving, so as to make it impossible to extricate them.) But, nevertheless, the time is coming when they shall proceed no further; for their folly shall be manifested unto all men, as was the folly of Jannes and Jambres, who could not forever withstand the teachings of Moses, the servant of God. (2 Tim. 3-8, 9).

Then Paul proceeds to call attention to the ground of Timothy's confidence in himself as a faithful teacher of Divine Truth, saying, "But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured; but out of them all the Lord delivered me." Vs. 10-11.

Such are always the marks of a true teacher. His doctrine will be that which the most thorough investigation of the Scriptures most clearly proves and establishes beyond all peradventure. His manner of life will be consistent both with this faith and with his consecration to the Lord. His purpose will be the building up of the Church in the most holy faith. His faith will be positive and clear—not mere guesswork, but knowledge based upon the sure Word of God, with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning. And his great love for the Church will be manifest, as was Paul's, and as was Moses' love for Israel, by long-suffering, patience, and meek endurance of persecution, both from an opposing world and from false brethren arising in the midst of God's people. And in such persecutions no true teacher will be lacking; for "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (V. 12.) Such has been the experience of every true teacher that God has ever raised up to deliver and guide his people. Witness, Noah, Moses, Paul and Luther.

But, Beloved, our advice to you in these perilous times, when error is taking on its most baneful and deceitful forms, and when it is finding its most active agents amongst false brethren and sisters in your very midst, and when fidelity to Truth, therefore, occasions the severing of some of the tenderest social ties you have ever known, even among those with whom you once held sweet converse as you walked together to the house of God—yes, in these times let us again urge the counsel of Paul—*"Continue thou in the things which thou has learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou has learned them"; for it is written* (John 6:45) *"They shall be all taught of God."* Whoever the human agent may be that God has made use of to bring you to a knowledge of the truth, he was simply an index finger to help you trace it for yourself on the sacred page; and in humility and faithfulness he made no greater claim than this, assuring you that the holy Scriptures to which he ever and continually pointed are indeed "able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus"; and that "all Scripture, given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

THE PRECIOUS TRUTH IS GOD'S MESSAGE.

Therefore, dearly beloved, what you have learned concerning God's glorious Plan of the Ages, and concerning your privileged place in that Plan, as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, his Son, and concerning the conditions upon which you hold this precious promise and may finally realize it, and concerning that great foundation doctrine of our redemption from sin and death through the precious blood of "the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all," upon which fact rests the whole superstructure of the wondrous and glorious Plan, *hold fast* these things, knowing of whom you have learned them. This precious Truth is God's message to you, not man's. No such high and glorious hope could ever have entered the mind of mortal men had not God revealed it by his Spirit, as he has done through faith in his Word, in his own due time. It is all in that Word. Search and see for yourselves; and be not faithless, but believing. It comes not to you on the miserable authority of vain imagination, or dreams, or doubtful visions, but on the authority of God's most holy and authentic Word. True, it is almost too good to believe, but is it not just like our God? Does it not gloriously illustrate the breadth of his mighty mind, the scope of his marvelous wisdom and power, and the depth of his love and grace?

Continue, therefore, in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of (having proved them yourselves from the Scriptures), and be not of them who turn away their ears from the Truth and are turned unto fables. And observing those who have a form of godliness, but who, nevertheless, by their false teachings deny the power thereof *"from such turn away,"* and "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."

We cannot serve two masters; *we cannot espouse the cause of Truth and the cause of error as well;* nor can we retain the friendship of God and of the advocates of error also. Who is on the Lord's side? Let them rally around the Lord's standard. All told, they will be only a "little flock." Like Gideon's band, the company now gathered by the proclamation of the harvest-message of Truth must be tested and sifted until only the loyal, faithful, true-hearted, brave and valiant soldiers of the cross remain; and to these, though their numbers be small, will the laurels of victory belong when Truth and righteousness finally prevail. Let no man boast of *numbers* now when the highest interests of the elect of God are all bound up with the faithful *few,* to whom it will be the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom.

"Count me the swords that have come."
"Lord, thousands on thousands are ready."
"Lo, these are too many, and with them are some
Whose hearts and whose hands are not steady.
He whose soul does not burn,
Let him take up his tent and return."

"Count me the swords that remain."
"Lord, hundreds on hundreds are daring."
"These yet are too many for me to attain
To the victory I am preparing.
Lead them down to the brink
Of the waters of Marah to drink."

"Lord, *those who remain are but few;*
And the hosts of the foe are appalling,
And what can a handful such as we do?"
"When ye hear from beyond my voice calling
Sound the trump! Hold the light!
Great Midian will melt in your sight."

—Z. '10, 389-392.

OUR LORD BETRAYED AND DENIED

"Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men."—Matt. 17:22.

Today's lesson constitutes one of the saddest chapters in history. It reveals to us the depths of human ingratitude, selfishness, weakness, and fear to a remarkable degree. Nevertheless, it is a most helpful lesson to those who are in the right attitude of heart to receive it, because it warns against weaknesses more or less common to all and against dangers to which all are exposed. It emphasizes our Lord's words to the twelve apostles, words which are applicable also to all of His followers—*"Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."*

To get the proper bearings of this lesson we go back to the early hours of the same evening when Jesus and His chosen twelve met to eat the Passover Supper. For three years our Lord had been training those twelve men, preparing them to be His representatives in the world, His mouthpieces to the Church. They had seen his power, known his teachings and themselves had exercised the power of healing and casting out devils, his power operating through them. He had been on the alert to instruct them as to the need of humility; that they must become as little children, simple, earnest and obedient, in order to be fitted for the Kingdom which they were called to share with him. On several occasions he had been obliged to call to their attention the necessity for meekness and humility, as he perceived the spirit of ambition and rivalry amongst them. On this last evening which he would spend with them in the flesh, he had noted with regret that when assembling for the Passover Supper they had neglected the usual hospitalities of the time not only toward each other, but also toward him, their Leader, their Master, whom they professed to believe was the special Son of God, the Messiah. They had neglected to wash one another's feet and his feet, a custom almost a necessity to comfort in that dusty land, where sandals are worn instead of shoes.

"I, YOUR LORD—SERVANT OF ALL."

Forgetful of his own weight of care and sorrow, and anxious for the welfare of his followers, Jesus improved the opportunity to teach them all a great lesson in humility. He took water in a basin and a towel and did the feet-washing, while the disciples, ashamed, confused, knew not what to say or do under the circumstances, except Peter, who protested that he could not thus have the Master act as his servant; but when Jesus explained that there was a symbolical meaning to the matter, Peter also was anxious for the washing. Lest they should fail to get the lesson, our Lord, after he had finished, explained it, saying, "If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, have displayed humility and willingness to serve any of you in the most menial capacity, you surely ought to be willing to follow the same example with one another, and to perform the most menial service for one another, even to the extent of washing one another's feet, as opportunity may offer."

It was not long before this that Jesus, talking to the apostles, told them plainly that he would be delivered up to the authorities and that the disciples would all forsake him. This seemed a hard statement to the apostles; an intimation that Jesus lacked confidence in them, and it was the impulsive Peter who spoke up and declared that although all should deny the Lord and forsake him, he would never do so. It was then that our Lord prophetically told him that before the second cock crowing at night he would deny his Master, and assured him that Satan desired to capture him, but that he was praying for him, that his faith would not fail. Surely these statements were of value to the Apostle in his hour of temptation; surely they helped to put all the apostles on guard against what was to be expected.

"LORD IS IT I? LORD IS IT I?"

Proceeding further in his cautioning, our Lord declared, "Verily I say unto you, one of you shall betray me!" What consternation must have prevailed! Could it be that amongst those who were so highly favored of the Lord and so long associated with him there could be one so base as to deny his Lord?

Let us not lose the force of this lesson; let us remember that the Lord's disciples down through the Gospel Age have been as the Apostle here declares of the twelve, "Men of like passions with you," men from the common walks of life, neither above nor below the average standard of human imperfection! Let us remember that the same Lord who cautioned those twelve respecting the trials coming upon them is still mindful of the Church, his flock, and we may suppose especially mindful of all who are in any prominent place of responsibility amongst the brethren. He still guards us, warns us, seeks to keep us from falling under the power of the Adversary. He still prays for his faithful, those who at heart are loyal to him, but who have weaknesses of the flesh which are liable to make their temptations more severe. As our Lord's interest in and efforts for the apostles increased as they neared the special hour of their temptation, so we may be sure that it is also with respect to his Church in general today, when the last members of his Body, the "feet of him," are approaching the crucial hour, "The hour of temptation that cometh upon the whole world to try them."—Rev. 3:10.

The Master does not speak to us in audible tones, as he did to those twelve, but has he not spoken to us with equal force and earnestness? Do not the words and actions of the Lord to those disciples come to us today with the same lesson and with as much force as they bore to them? Have we not, in addition to these examples and warnings, special declarations of the Scriptures respecting the end of the age? Did not our Lord, in the parable of the suitable and unsuitable fish, explain to us that in the end of this Gospel Age there would be a separation of those in the Gospel net? Does he not again in the parable of the wheat and the tares tell us of the separation due to take place in the harvest time of this Gospel Age, when only the true and the ripe wheat will be gathered into the barn? Does he not through the Apostle forewarn us that in the end of the age perilous times shall come because men will be lovers of their own selves—selfish, ambitious—lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God? (2 Tim. 3:1, 2.) Does he not tell us that it would be at the time in the Divine Plan when God would send (permit) strong delusions, so that all might believe a lie who shall not have received the truth in the love of it and with zeal?—2 Thess. 2:11.

"THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION THAT SHALL TRY."

Does he not also tell us that the temptations of this hour will be such as would, if it were possible, deceive the "very elect," but that in their case *it will not be possible* because of their love, their zeal and the consequent blessings and privileges that divine favor wil provide for them! And if to Peter special encouragement was given—"I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not"—have we not a full equivalent of this in the Scriptural assurance, "Lo, I am with you alway," "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in your weakness"? (Matt. 28:30;

2 Cor. 12:9.) Surely we have much advantage every way over the apostles in their trial, and this advantage is emphasized in the fact that their trial came upon them before their anointing with the holy Spirit, whereas our testings come to us at the time we are of the anointed Body. When we now look out into the future and hear the message, "The morning cometh, but a night also" (Isa. 21:12), we may well *BE FOREWARNED as to what to expect in that short night of trouble which will affect the consecrated followers before it reaches the world in general. We must expect in this hour of trial that "a thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee"*; yet we must remember that this promise is limited to the class specified, to those who have made the Lord, even the Most High, their refuge and habitation; for no evil can come nigh their dwelling place. (Psa. 91:7, 9.) Therefore, dearly beloved, putting on the whole armor of God that we may be able to stand in this evil day, we will need to watch unto prayer for ourselves and for those over whom the holy Spirit hath made us overseers, that we may feed the flock of God, which he hath purchased with the blood of his own Son.—Acts 20:28, *Diaglott.*

As the eating of a meal together was a pledge of faithfulness, so for the Master to dip a special sop was a special mark of favor, and this was given to Judas at the supper to indicate the one who would betray the Lord. We can better imagine than describe how the apostles, in various tones, asked the Lord, "Is it I?" and how Judas likewise asked the same question! We can imagine the look of our Lord's eye as he gave him the sop, saying in action and look, Judas, why do you resist the loving kindnesses which I have bestowed upon you? You have professed to be my friend and disciple; I surely have done the part of a friend toward you. That glance and that sop should have overwhelmed the selfish Judas, but as the mercy of the Lord, in the taking away of the plagues from Pharaoh had so much the more hardened Pharaoh's heart, so every additional manifestation of our Lord's humility and kindness seems to have had the effect of hardening the heart of Judas. In answer to our Lord's glance and sop Judas, so far from repenting, was more embittered, more determined to carry out his program. It shone in his eye; our Lord read his thoughts and answered in words, "What thou doest, do quickly."

Let us not lose the lesson in its application and bearing upon the Lord's people of today. If any amongst the consecrated are cultivating selfishness and personal ambition, they are preparing themselves for such a termination as that of Judas. The influence of the spirit they are cultivating will lead them further and further from sympathy with the Lord's cause and the faithful brethren until, like Judas, *they shall be ready to sell the truth for a little personal advantage. And when such a condition of heart has been reached by those who were once enlightened and have tasted of the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come, no power will hinder them from going to the limit of their evil course. . . . As in Judas' case we read that then Satan entered into him, so with a similar class here; we may expect the Adversary to get fuller power and control over them.*

THE LESSONS OF GETHESMANE.

One would think that the impressive lessons of that night would have so filled the minds of the apostles and made them so alert that sleep would have been far from their eyes. But not so; they scarcely understood how to take the Master's words; he had said so many remarkable things which they did not comprehend; it seemed so incomprehensible that he who had come to be the Messiah and reign, should be betrayed and crucified, and that they whom he had promised should sit with him in his throne should all forsake him and flee. Hence the repeated instruction that they should watch and pray made little impression. Even the three special friends of Jesus, the ones who he made his special confidants and took with him to the Mount of Transfiguration on another special occasion without the others—even these three slumbered, except as from time to time the Lord visited them and awakened them and they noted certain incidents which they recorded for us.

"LEST ANY ROOT OF BITTERNESS SPRING UP."

How is it now? The night of trouble nearing, the hour of trial that shall try all that dwell upon the face of the whole earth coming close, and with the many warnings of the Master through the Word that we should watch and pray lest we enter into temptation!—how is it with us? Alas! *many* of those, who like Peter, James and John, have been specially favored of the Lord, especially near to him, *fail to realize the importance of the time in which we are living, fail to realize that the foretold temptations are about to come upon them* and that, like Peter, they will be in great danger of being swept away, sifted out from amongst the Lord's faithful.

We can imagine our Lord's condition to some extent. His great hour of trial was upon him; he realized it to the full; it meant not only that his own faithfulness, past and present and on the day following, would decide respecting his loyalty to the Father and his right to obtain the high reward of glory, honor and immortality, but it meant additionally that the interests of the whole world of mankind were in the balance! Victory would mean eventually the deliverance of all the prisoners in bondage to sin and death; failure would mean the loss of everything. Can we wonder that his soul was exceedingly sorrowful, and that in his intensity of feeling bloody perspiration oozed from his pores? Ah, dear Master! Well was it written of him, "Of the people there was none with me." Even his most intimate and most beloved disciples failed to appreciate the conditions and to render him the sympathetic aid which he craved. What would those disciples afterward not have given to have had back the opportunity of ministering to their Lord in his hour of trial! What a privilege they let slip! There is a lesson here for us also, for although the Master is not in the flesh and will suffer no more, some of his members are still in the flesh, some who must suffer with him if they would reign with him. Our sufferings are not all just like those of the Master, nor are they just the same with each of us; each has his own experiences to prove, to test, to fit, to polish him that he may be made meet for the Master's use. Have we, each for the other, that sympathy, that yearning love which would lead us to help one another and to bear one another's burdens and thus to fulfil the Law of Christ, the Law of Love? Or have we the Judas spirit to injure? Or have we the spirit of slothful indifference and lack of appreciation which would lead us to slumber while the interests of others of the body are at stake, while the brethern are suffering and are in trial? Our practical answer to these questions the Lord is looking for, and his love and his favor will be upon those who manifest most of his Spirit. To us much has been given, in that the hour of testing along these lines comes to us after we have received the anointing of the holy Spirit. Of us, correspondingly more will be expected.—Z. '08, 139-141.

THEM THAT HONOR ME, I WILL HONOR

"If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God." James 1:5.

Joseph's three years' experience as a prisoner, most of it as the superintendent of the prison, undoubtedly brought to him a rich experience of patience and sympathy, and tended to confirm and deepen those beautiful elements of his character manifested in his boyhood. The Lord had him in training for a great work; not only was it appropriate that his character should be developed, but also that his faith should be tested and made very strong. We have seen that although he trusted the Lord implicitly, this did not hinder him from appealing to Pharoah's butler, whose dream he interpreted favorably, asking him that when restored to the king's favor he would remember Joseph's kindness to him as a prisoner and speak a word in his interest to secure his liberty. Perhaps he expected much from this man, who certainly would have had many opportunities for requiting his kindness, yet two years rolled around without relief—two years in which, nevertheless, Joseph maintained his confidence in the Lord and waited patiently for the outworkings of his plan.

There could be no better illustration than this for the proper course of all who belong to the New Creation. In a speical sense all of our interests are the Lord's, because we have presented ourselves to him wholly, unreservedly, and have been accepted as members of the body of Christ. It is for such to remember the Master's words, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of," "The Father himself loveth you," "No man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand," "All things shall work together for good to them that love God." While, therefore, it is proper for us to make use of any and every reasonable means for the securing of what we consider to be our best interests, we are not to rely upon these but upon the Lord, and to wait patiently for his time and his way for our deliverance from every evil condition.

WAIT PATIENTLY FOR HIM.

The Lord's time and method for delivering Joseph from the prison transcended all of Joseph's expectations; and lifted him from the prison to the palace of the greatest nation of that time. It came about eventually through the mediation of the butler, but to the latter's shame it was not because of his appreciation or thoughtfulness. Pharaoh had two dreams which impressed his mind deeply, and he earnestly sought the interpretation of them. He dreamed of seeing seven cows come up out of the river Nile, very fat, and feed upon luxuriant grass of the river side; next he saw seven lean cows come up out of the river, and they devoured the seven fat ones, yet seemed none the fatter themselves. This dream was followed by another in which the king saw a stalk of Egyptian wheat, known as compound wheat; its top was exceeding large, dividing into seven distinct branches or spikes, indicating a most prolific yield; and following it came up another stalk, with seven thin ears or branches, of the kind common to a time of famine, when lack of moisture and a southeast wind would injure the crop and make it worthless. The last stalk of seven branches devoured the first one.

"IN ALL THY WAYS ACKNOWLEDGE HIM."

When the wise men of Egypt were unable to interpret Pharaoh's dream, his butler naturally enough called to mind his own dream and how accurately it had been interpreted by the kind and sympathizing Joseph, and his own promise to do something for the interpreter, and his neglect until this time. Perhaps he was not entirely to blame; he could only be useful to Joseph when God's time for favoring the latter had come. When Pharaoh heard the story of the wonderful interpretation of the dreams of his butler and baker he sent with haste to the prison, eager to know the meaning of his own dreams. Here we have a further test of Joseph's character. Let us notice carefully how he demeaned himself in the presence of the king. Was he haughty, boastful, self-assertive? Did he throw around himself a mystery and seem to call from the recesses of his mind some deep wisdom? Not so. He was the very personification of modesty, and when the king expressed the hope that he could interpret his dreams he answered, "It is not of me; God shall give Pharaoh an answer."

Here we have one of the secrets of the greatness of Joseph; he honored God, and was therefore of the kind whom God is pleased eventually to honor and exalt. How the Scriptures bear out this thought! Mark our Master's words, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, he that exalteth himself shall be abased." (Luke, 14:11). Mark the Apostle's words, "Humble yourselves therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." (1 Pet., 5:6). O, that we all might have this lesson deeply impressed upon our hearts and minds, so that with us it will be true, as with Joseph, in harmony with the instruction, "In all thy ways acknowledge him." Prov. 3:6.

While such an acknowledgment of the Lord is proper in all the affairs of life, it certainly is especially appropriate in connection with the study of the divine Word and any attempt to give an interpretation thereof. Let none of us speak as of ourselves, nor appropriate wisdom to ourselves, but rather, with hearts full of gratitude to the Lord for blessings received, *let us acknowledge him and his Word and his arrangements in connection with his Truth.* Especially is this appropriate in those who occupy positions of responsibility in the Church—whom the holy Spirit has made overseers to "feed the flock of Christ." To whatever extent self-seeking is indulged, to whatever extent the honor of men is craved, the Lord as the fountain of wisdom and the channels which he uses in dispensing his Truth are ignored or belittle by any of us, to that extent we may be sure we are in a dangerous situation and not likely to make real progress in the good way.

SEIZING FAVORABLE OPPORTUNITIES.

Pharaoh related his dreams, and after hearing them Joseph promptly gave the interpretation and explained that the two dreams were one—that they taught the same lesson; that thus the Lord had indicated to Pharaoh that there would be seven years of very bountiful harvests which would be followed by seven years of drouth and famine, in which all the surplus of the first seven years would be necessary for the preservation of the lives of the people. A lighter-headed man than Joseph, a man who felt that in interpreting the dream he had confounded the wise men of Egypt, had done a wonderful thing, would have been so overwhelmed with the sense of his own importance that he doubtless would have stood there and received the king's thanks, and have passed out a free man to be noted by the people as the wise man.

The humility of Joseph was not merely assumed; his crediting of the wisdom to the Lord was the genuine sentiment of his heart so that he did not feel thus elated when he had delivered the Lord's message, but with coolness and self-possession he proceeded to suggest to the king what might be the proper steps to be taken so that the dream might indeed prove a blessing. He said, "Let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years; and let them gather all the fruit of those seven years as the property of Pharaoh, to be kept in store in cities for use in the seven years of famine that will follow." We cannot suppose that Joseph had the slightest suspicion that he would be the one appointed to this work. It would be a most unnatural expectation that Pharaoh would take from the prison a man of foreign birth and exalt him to a station above the other officers of his empire. Yet this is just what Pharaoh did, and it is here that our lesson proper commences.

COULD WE CHOOSE MORE WISELY THAN GOD?

Addressing his court officers Pharaoh said, Could we find such another one as this Joseph, in whom is the Spirit of God, to be at the head of this great work of preparing for the years of famine of which God has thus forewarned us? Not waiting to have the consent of the officers of his court, but after the manner of the time as an autocrat, he decided the question and said to Joseph, "forasmuch as God has showed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art; thou shalt be over my house (kingdom), and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled; only in the throne will I be greater than thou. See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt."

So thrilling a transition from slavery and the dungeon to the governorship of the greatest country of the world, and honor and distinction and power next to those of the king, outrivals the pen of fiction in the most attractive novels. It seems so wonderful that it is difficult to believe its truthfulness. Hence it is well for us to remember that while such transitions would not be possible under the democratic conditions of our day and country, they were not out of harmony with the conditions of their time and place. For instance, we know that Daniel was a Hebrew captive and slave, and yet that he was chosen by Nebuchadnezzar to be one of the rulers of the empire of Babylon. We remember also that Daniel was brought to the King's notice in a very similar manner, by the interpretation of a dream.

The exaltation of Joseph from the condition of a slave and from a dungeon to be the second person of power in the world, suggests to us further the typical character of Joseph's life. Did not our Lord Jesus take a bondsman's form? and did he not enter the great prison-house of death? and was he not suddenly raised up to the throne—to be next to the Father, the Governor of the universe? And did not the experiences of Jesus under God's providence have to do with preparing him for his great work of the future, the blessing of the whole world? And as Joseph saved the lives of the people of Egypt, will not the anti-typical Joseph save the lives of the world? While thinking along these lines let us remember, too, how we are invited to be members of the body of Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together. (Rom. 8:17). With this thought in our minds, the trials, the difficulties, the sufferings of the present time, its afflictions, disappointments, may all be endured with cheerfulness if we have the proper faith—knowing that all things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called ones according to his purpose.

"UNTO HIM EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW."

When the time came for King Pharaoh to introduce the new governor or prime minister of the empire to the people he first provided for him suitable apparel, to indicate the rank; next, the second state chariot, and, third, that he should be escorted in parade before the people by criers, who should announce his rank and call upon the people to bow the knee—to acknowledge him as the king's representative. How this reminds us of the Apostle's words respecting our Lord Jesus and his high exaltation after his trials were concluded. Paul says, "Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth." (Phil. 2:9, 10.) And while we contemplate this high exaltation of the Master let us not forget that his Bride is to be joint-heir with him in all of his glory, honor and immortality, and that the privilege of becoming members of the Bride class belongs to the "called, chosen, faithful," the "very elect" of this Gospel age.

If we could but have this in mind continually, what manner of persons would we be in all holy conversation and godliness—how trifling all earthly pleasures and sorrows, all riches and poverty, all weakness and debasement would seem to us! so intense would we be in our desire to make our calling and election sure to those exceeding great and precious promises. Pharaoh gave Joseph a new name, the meaning of which is suggested to be something like—Deliverer from death by the bread of life. We remember how our dear Redeemer said of himself, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." God provided in Jesus the bread of life, by which the whole world may be saved eventually from Adamic death if they but eat of the divine Word, appropriate its lessons and experiences, under the ministry and discipline of the great Redeemer during his glorious Kingdom. And all this was considerably illustrated in Joseph's course as the governor of Egypt.

DID JOSEPH ENSLAVE THE EGYPTIANS?

Some have severely criticised Joseph's course in dealing with the people on this occasion, but we find no criticism of it in the Scriptures. His first work was to journey throughout the entire land of Egypt, select suitable sites as granaries and to give contracts for the building of these. Then throughout the seven years of bountiful harvests he first of all collected from the people their usual tax of one-fifth of the product for the king. Additionally he bought from the people with the king's money all the surplus grain they could spare and thus laid up vast stores of wheat. When the years of drouth and famine came the people in turn were glad to buy from the government the very same grain that they had previously sold. We have no intimation that an exorbitant price was charged for the wheat, no intimation that advantage was taken of the people.

But after the people had spent their money still the famine prevailed, and Joseph, the governor, purchased their cattle and all the people had, which thus became the property of the king. This was not an ideal condition according to our conception of matters, because it left too much of a centralization of power and authority in the hands of an autocrat; but if we could imagine divinely appointed and divinely guided and divinely willed kings and prists in the world, such an autocratic power would be one of the very greatest blessings imaginable to all the people. Indeed we know through the Scriptures that this will practically be the condition of affairs that will prevail during the Millennial age—that the world will not be asked to vote for its rulers and to determine its laws, but simply be required to obey the great Governor of divine appointment, unto whom every knee must bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God.

Here, then, in Joseph we see another illustration or type of the Christ of Glory and the manner in which he will bless the world. Our Redeemer has already laid up in store a complete provision of the bread of life, sufficient for every member of our race. In him was life, and he gave it on our behalf. We who are now accepted as his members, and who at once receive this life by faith when we accept him, and will receive it actually in the First Resurrection, are the predecessors of the world in the matter of these blessing. *Only the little flock is now being developed,* now being fed, now passing from death unto life, through accepting the bread from heaven—only the Bride and the Virgins, her companions. The great work which God has in mind, and for which he has appointed our Redeemer, is the work of saving the world, and the time and the means for this salvation of the world is the Millennial age, the reign of the Kingdom of heaven amongst men.

THE BREAD FROM HEAVEN.

During the Millennium the great Provider of the Bread of life and his associated Bride will dispense to the world, through the agency of the ancient worthies, the Bread of life as they will need it and be able to appreciate it. Day by day and year by year, during all that time, the world must bow the knee to the great Ruler and Representative of Jehovah. And during all that time they will be required to give up one thing after another for the attainment of the eternal life, until finally, at the end of the Millennial age, all who remain—not cut off in the Second Death—shall have given their property, their all, including themselves, in exchange for the eternal life represented by this living Bread that came from heaven, of which, if a man eat, he shall never die.

The abundance of corn gathered by Joseph typically assures us of the abundance of God's provision for granting eternal life to every member of the human family willing to receive it from the Son upon the terms of loving obedience to the extent of full surrender. While the surrender of the will and of all that we possess to a fellow mortal would be a very dangerous matter indeed, against which we should properly strive, it is not so as respects the Lord. He is the grand exception. To give ourselves wholly and unreservedly to him is to bring to each of us, through his blessing, the peace of God which passeth all understanding, and to have him mould and fashion our characters with all our interests of life to our highest welfare and his glory. What a blessed prospect then is before the world! and how we who by faith eat of this Bread in advance, and participate with the anti-typical Joseph in all of his trials and sufferings for righteousness' sake, may rejoice in our privilege. Z. '07, 119-122.

KERNELS

Whoever compromises the Truth is very likely to have it taken from him.—Z. '17, 236.

Another evidence of faithfulness would be our being accounted worthy to suffer reproaches and persecutions for the Lord's sake and the Truth's sake—and our acceptance of these as of Divine providence.—Z. '11, 343.

Jesus intimates that many who heard His words and expressed great appreciation of them, would fail to take the proper steps to attain the glorious Kingdom privileges which He presented. They would allow custom, habit, love of pleasure, love of ease, the spirit of the world, to hinder them either from making the proper, full devotion of themselves to God, or from carrying out that purpose. Such, indeed, might to some extent encourage themselves with hopes of the Kingdom which would never be realized, because they never took the proper steps.—Z. '14, 59.

Too often do the Lord's people and others forget that the Lord is not inattentive to His own business, the interests of His own cause, but is working all things according to the counsel of His own will. As Bible students, we should more and more learn to appreciate this great fact and to remember that prosperity in the Lord's work cannot come by might or human power or cunning, but only by and in harmony with the Lord's Spirit, the Lord's Power, the Lord's Will.—Z. '13, 270.

So far as Jesus is concerned, our services must be undivided.—Z. '13, 333.

Is there not danger of worshipping the human institutions, and thus of having something to come between the soul of the Christian and his God? We believe that there is a serious danger along this line.—Z. '13, 253, 254.

We are not to love the present order or arrangement, nor the things that are part and parcel of it, identified with with it; but rather we are to love the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth." We are to love the world only in the sense of having sympathy with it, as our Heavenly Father has, while we are *unsympathetic with its arrangements.*

According to God's arrangements, we must take our choice between the Divine friendship and fellowship, and worldly friendship and fellowship.—Z. '11, 56, 57.

The holy angels, indeed, have a *charge* concerning the saints, but not to give them *instruction* of any kind. The Bible most explicitly declares that the Word of God is sufficient that the man of God may be *thoroughly furnished* (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). We are not therefore to expect visions or revelations or any kind of communications from the Lord or the holy angels. We are to conclude that all such attempts to communicate with us are of the Adversary and to shun them accordingly.—Z. '13, 350.

Whoever recognizes that there are only two masters—Christ and Satan—should resolve to have nothing whatever to do with anything that is of Satan.—Z. '13, 350.

It will be after the smiting of Jordan—after the division of the people by the Message of the Truth and the mantle of Elijah's power—that the separation of the Church into two classes will take place. *Thereafter, the Elijah class, the Little Flock Class, will be clearly manifested, separate and distinct from the Great Company Class.* The division, be it remembered, will be caused by the Fiery Chariot—some very severe, trying ordeal, which the Elect Class will promptly accept and enter into; the Elijah Class holding back from the persecution, but not drawing back to sin or to a repudiation of the Lord. It will be but a little later on that the whirlwind (probably anarchy) will bring about the "change" of the Elijah Class.—Z. '16, 264.

We do well here, perhaps, to call attention to the fact that the consecration which would not permit us to expend money for jewelry, or gorgeous, or extravagant apparel, would not, as a rule, be any more faithfully used as stewarts if investing it in stocks, bonds, real estate, etc., instead of wearing it upon our persons or lavishing it upon our homes. Money is valuable for the use to which we can put it, and each member of the New Creation possessing wealth should consider carefully the responsibilities of the stewartship, and be prompt to use it according to his judgment of the Divine will.—F. 597.

Satan sets himself up as an angel of light; but his servants cannot see this, and thus he has them continually at a disadvantage. He says, *"You need not serve Mammon; but be moderate in your course.* Serve the present things. Do a little on this side and a little on that." And they say, "We will really in our hearts serve God; but outwardly we must serve Mammon. Otherwise we shall have trouble."—Z. '13, 333.

If we practice those things which our understanding of God's Word teaches us He would not approve, seeds are thus sown to the flesh. *Every inch that we yield*—whether in thought, word or actions—means so much *decrease* of spiritual power; and the New Creature grows weaker.—Z. '16, 231.

Are you of those who have really given themselves to the Lord saying truthfully to Him:

"Take myself—I will to be
Ever, only, all for Thee"?

If so, you are just *narrow-minded* enough to say, "This *one thing* I do."—Z. '12, 194.

While obedient to the Lord, we are entirely safe. Then the evil spirits cannot do us injury. "The wicked one toucheth him not." But the slightest yielding of the will, as through curiosity, is dangerous.—Z. '13, 350.

Courage is always admirable, but there is a moral courage which should rank higher far than physical. This moral courage is greatly needed amongst the Lord's people; without it they can do nothing, and many of their difficulties in the Christian way are because they fail to appreciate this matter and fail to develop this courage. It requires real courage of the highest order to stand for the Lord's Truth and His people when these are misunderstood, misrepresented, antagonized. It takes real courage to stand for the light when the great Adversary with a world-wide influence brands it as darkness, and leads an assault against it. It requires real courage to denounce the darkness, meekly, persistently, when it has on its side wealth, culture, influence and Churchianity.—Z. '07, 283.

Beloved, as you value the glorious hope set before you, we beseech you that you give no heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, as the Apostle terms them (1 Tim. 4:1), but that with fixedness of purpose you apply yourselves to the one thing to which you are called, and which as prospective heirs of Messiah's Kingdom you are privileged to do. Let us not forget that we are a "peculiar people" separate from the great body of nominal Christians, as well as from the world, having higher hopes, aims and ambitions, and favored with a clearer insight into the deep things of God.—Z. '12, 194.

If, therefore, any of the brethren feel disposed to go out after the manner of Babylon and preach something else, here is the *reproof*—"Not . . . *anything* save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." This is the ***only subject***. St. Paul would be as though he ***knew nothing else***. This subject would be the *one thing* to which he would give his time and attention. Let it be so with us.—Z. '12, 194.

If faithful in this service, we have neither time nor disposition to give heed to other themes having no bearing on the *one thing* to which we have solemnly dedicated our lives.—Z. '12, 194.

Is not this a very narrow way? Yes, so *narrow* that our Lord foretold respecting it, "Strait (difficult) is the gate and *narrow* is the way which leadeth unto *(the)* life, and *few* there be that *find it"* (Matt. 7:14). It is so *narrow* that it is wide enough to admit only the Lord's Plan and those who are willing to *discard ALL other plans,* projects and questionings, and to devote themselves fully to its service; and who are quite willing to bear any reproach it may bring.—Z. '12, 194.

No action can be regarded as a favor or a manifestation of *love* which has not underneath it the substantial foundation of *justice*.—Z. '16, 115.

Now is the time for the Church to be specially on the alert, to be attentive, to fortify themselves against the wiles of the world, the flesh and the Adversary. As the poet Longfellow has expressed it,

"Be not like dumb, driven *cattle;*
Be a *hero* in the strife!"

We might be in the Lord's army and yet be *like* driven cattle. But we are to be intelligent. The Lord has given us an understanding of His Plan.—Z. '13, 312.

If the Adversary finds one well protected and resisting him with a firm will, he will at once retreat. But if there be any parley with sin, any tendency to consider a matter when it is seen to be a sin, an entrance is at once made for the Adversary; and he will renew the attack and press the matter, placing it in the most alluring light, in order that he may take control, that he may enter the heart where he has found the weakness.

Hence, it is of the utmost importance that the child of God should make a positive and prompt decision when he realizes that he is being enticed to evil. A moment's hesitation is very dangerous. Those who take their stand for the Lord, who give themselves fully and unreservedly to Him, He has agreed to protect. He may permit them to be assailed for a time, but He will deliver them so long as they remain loyal and true; and they will be made stronger as the result of the temptations.—Z. '16, 148.

Our daily exhortation to self should be:

"My soul, be on thy guard,
Ten thousand foes arise;
The hosts of Sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the prize."
—Z. '13, 312.

Love, in the sense of human sympathy, has no place in the deciding of such questions where the Word of the Lord lays down the rules to be followed.—Z. '16, 206.

Let us, . . . feel perfectly free to do the Lord's will in every matter, even the smallest, even to the extent of bringing upon ourselves the disapprobation of the world and the worldly, even though it brings us stripes, imprisonment. We have not the crown yet, but the cross, and whatever will help us to take it up and bear it faithfully will be a cause for thanksgiving.—Z. '09, 25.

We are to be subject to earthly powers, as respects earthly things, we have a still *higher* responsibility in respect to the spiritual, the heavenly things.—Z. '09, 25.

The Apostle Paul in his writings lays special emphasis upon the fundamental importance of correct doctrinal teaching. It made no diference whether Paul or Apollos or even an angel from Heaven taught anything, it must be in harmony with the foundation doctrines which had been given them by the Lord (Galatians 1:6-12). He assured the Church that what He had taught them was from God; and that even if an angel should bring them another Gospel, it would be a proof that such angel had deflected from loyalty to the Lord.—Z. '16, 195.

When our work is done, and that night closes in around us, we may expect not only to see the storm-clouds grow much darker, but also to hear and to feel the rising "winds" which will culminate in a wild hurricane of human passion —a whirlwind of trouble. Then, having finished our appointed work, it will be our part to "stand" (fast), patiently, until our "change" comes.—Eph. 6:13. How long the Lord may be pleased to let His saints stand in enforced idleness so far as His work is concerned, we do not know, but probably only long enough to let faith and patience have their perfect work. Here these virtues will be most fully developed, tested and manifested. This test of patience will be the final trial of the Church. Then "God will help her, at the dawning of (her) morning," not the morning which is to dawn on the world . . . but at the dawning of *her* morning, in which she is to be changed to the nature and likeness of her Lord.—C. 230, 231.

By *love* we mean, not amativeness nor soft sentimentality, but that principle of kindness, sympathy, consideration and benevolence which we see manifested in our Heavenly Father and in our Lord Jesus.—Z. '16, 115.

He (The Lord) places *obedience* to His arrangements first, even before sacrifice, saying, "Ye are My disciples, *if ye do those things which I have commanded you.*"—Z. '17, 228.

It is the duty of all who see the Truth clearly to act positively. Whoever lends financial aid or moral support to the great systems which are opposing the true teachings of GOD'S Word, and assisting in the perpetuation of Satan's lie, is a partaker of the evil deeds and will share in the woes soon to come.—Sermons 135.

LET US FAITHFULLY FOLLOW JESUS IN THE NARROW WAY, WHATEVER OTHERS ABOUT US MAY DO; AND SOON WE SHALL HEAR HIS SWEET "WELL DONE!"—Z. '16, 58.

INTERESTING LETTERS

Dear Brother:

Much love and greetings in the name of our dear Redeemer.

The report for last week is a meagre one, not much encouragement, but I expect better news for you this week. The Adversary has done all he can to keep me away from ——. The class sent two telegrams and two letters to different places and persons telling me not to call here as they all supported the I. B. S. A. I knew, however, that Bro. —— had been just ahead of me in these parts, so I determined that it was a trick of the evil one and we are not ignorant of his devices. I came on here all the same, to see Sister ——, for I felt sure the dear Saint must be a S. F. B. S.; this afternoon I went over to talk with her and found her very much bewildered, but intensely in earnest to do what was right. She called in Sister —— (secretary of the class), and after a very happy time together for an hour or more, I was invited to go and speak at the meeting tonight, so I fancy the Devil is going to get a set-back by the looks of things.

Continuation of letter next day.

Say, Brother, the Lord is doing marvelous things, whereof we rejoice. As I reported to you in letter No. 1, last evening I went to the —— class and spoke and answered their queries—not one question was put but what had a *conclusive* answer from God's Word or the Pastor's writings or both—it all seemed so clear cut and easy. The dear saints seemed so interested and impressed that they asked if I could not arrange to stay another day and meet with them again tonight! I have accordingly phoned to the —— class that I had better stay a day longer here, and as I shall still have two days there it won't rob them. So, Brother, here I am—isn't it wonderful, these dear sheep had been so misled as to telegraph and write all along the line to stop me from coming, and now that I am here they want me to stay an extra day!

I shall see tonight how these dear ones will go, but I shall be more than surprised if there are not some S. F. B. S. among them.

All love in Christ from,

Your Brother by His Grace,

——.

Dear Brethren:

With much Christian love and gladness of heart we are writing you a short report of what those dear angels of the Lord brought us here. (Read Vol. 3, page 214, last paragraph, for a description of this work.)

As for myself, I will enclose a copy of a letter written to my sister which will give you an idea of about how I feel in regard to this movement. (Letter referred to follows this one.)

When the sorting of the fish was finished here, there was a nice basket full of the special sort, about fifty in all. Now we are breaking bread with joy and gladness of heart from house to house. We have all day sessions on Sundays and the sweet fellowship, harmony, peace and joy are beyond description. We are searching the Scriptures to see whether these things be so and every meeting yields fresh proofs of our position.

I find that the great issue is separation from the Society. When we get in the "wilderness" we can see the "woman." (Rev. 17:3, comments, G, 259.)

All who are with us are "house top saints." We find it "better to dwell on the house top than to be in a large room with a quarrelsome woman." (Prov. 21:9.)

We had a "rousing" testimony meeting yesterday. Bro. Russell's birthday and the expressions of love for the Truth and gratitude for the Lord's servants sent here by you, spoke louder than all I could say.

Several are going to the —— convention from here, myself included, the Lord willing. If on my way back I could be of any service to any little class I would be glad to stop and encourage the dear ones. Gold and silver have I none, but such as I have is devoted to His service.

May God continue to guide you. You have our love and prayers.

F. M. C.—Minn.

Dear Sister:

I got a letter from ——— and am glad to get your address again. With exceeding joy and gladness do I hear that you are *standing fast.*

I just want you to get the June 1st, 1918, Tower, page 167, and read under the title "Stand Fast." I could say nothing better.

You have got the grandest message coming to you in this convention that God's people ever had the privilege of speaking in human ears, and every word of it comes under the seal and endorsement of "that Servant," Pastor Russell. "New Light?" No! "New Food?" No! It is "Old Corn" stored in the granaries for the Church of the Saints in their direst need.

Do not miss one talk. Do not let anything, children, home, family, friends or the Devil himself keep you away from even one of these talks, and when it is over and you have heard with your own ears, write me and tell me what you think of the dear Lord now.

May God bless you!

F. M. C.—Minn.

Dear Brother:

Greetings in His dear name!

This is just to let you know that it is done, and I am almost *done,* too. I have had a test and it has only proven more plainly to me that the saints are sealed, and though the Wicked One may desire to have them, may arouse all the old nature and try to kill the New Creature, yet he cannot. Oh, yes, the evil angels are loose and they have come down on me like a flood, but the Spirit of the Lord truly lifted up a standard against them. Satan can ***hurt*** but never *harm* God's little ones. Oh, if it had not been for the Lord, who was on my side, "my soul had almost dwelt in silence."

Do you remember before you left our home last September, I said to you one day, "No one can move me," and you replied, "I don't believe they can, sister"?

You know, Brother, I am not lukewarm; it is one thing or the other, no middle course for me. Do you know where I would have landed, if the Father had not stopped me? ***I would have been Judas!*** I can *now* see where I was unconsciously drifting. I had been fighting and it would not have ended until I had *betrayed!* So you see what I have to praise God for. My mind was stayed on the Lord so He would not let me go. Yes. I am a miracle of grace. "Lord, thy love at last has conquered."

Satan pushed me down, but I had two hands full of the promises. I cried unto the Lord and He came to my relief after great wrestlings. Do you think I belong to the tribe of Nephtalim? Did you think I was still a "sealed saint"? How could I be satisfied with a few droppings when there are "showers of blessings"?

I must tell you a little about the testimony meeting at the old hall where I went to give my parting witness. It was hard, but His grace was sufficient. I foolishly gave my testimony first, then had to sit there and hear all the fiery testimonies showered upon me, so was obliged in the end to stand up again and add a few more words. I called to their attention how thankfully I received the Truth, how I did not then know Pastor Russell or the Society, but "the Word was found and I did eat it"; how gladly I entered the Colporteur Work, and further reminded them that Brother Russell said the safest place for anyone is on "the firing line." Again Brother Russell impressed upon us the thought that the *Elijah class would persist in declaring the Truth unto the end so meet opposition, suffer violence and pass into glory.*

I reminded them, too, of the changed attitude of those at the "Bible House," and how this had brought the dividing. One brother said I had too much zeal and did not know where I was. This I had to refute. Then I gave them the scripture, "He that keepeth the Word of God, in him verily is the love of God perfected." Brother, I am very glad I went back for the Privilege of openly withdrawing from them.

Brother and Sister ——— gave their testimonies along the same lines. Brother ——— also gave a fine testimony. There is much I could tell you respecting the attitude of the elders toward us, for the spirit of the Lord was not manifested toward us at all.

Now may God bless you! My prayers are with you as you are seeking to comfort and establish the hearts and uphold the weak hands. I wish you to know that I am a "Stand Fast Bible Student." Will that do?

Yes, I am homesick! Lord, tarry not too long.

Love from us all,

Yours by His grace,

A. W.—Wis.

Dear Brother:

Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are all so extremely happy since the ——— convention. I cannot help but let you all know how we are rejoicing. To know and have the full assurance that we are *sealed* and have the intellectual knowledge and appreciation of God's great Plan and the nearness of the Kingdom of His dear Son, with whom we are to be joint-heirs, we now first fully appreciate.

What a feast we had in hearing five lectures and do so much regret having missed the other four entirely. But it first becomes real to us now, as we have been continually meditating on the discourses since. I took notes, but I could almost repeat the discourses without them. Never before since coming into Truth could we remember so much. The Lord pours it upon us in showers, so we are not able to receive it all. You see a great work awaited us here.

Three others and myself were the only ones who saw it clearly at the convention. Brother ——— was not quite settled and all the rest looked at us *a little queer* at first, but when we began to tell and explain their faces began to brighten up and by Wednesday evening the face of nearly every one in the class was shining for joy.

You see, Brother, the Lord showed us at once from both sides, a double portion—light on the one side and the terrible darkness on the other—by a letter from the Bible House to me asking me to go to all our neighbors with a sheet for names and gather their signatures to get our dear Brethren out of prison, who seemingly now regret that they had told the people the truth a year or more ago and are now tired of suffering for Christ.

Dear Brethren, how thankful we are that the Lord provided this convention for us to wake us out of danger from being deluded by the works of demons! "Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help!" My! How weak the Lord must look to them if they now need the same world to get them out of prison that put them in! And what a message this must be which is distributed from house to house in comparison to what was taken out a year ago and which caused them to be put in prison! It surely shows how far you can go down stream if you forsake the Lord and His word in this evil day.

I would be very glad if I could follow you up for about two weeks in this grand work, which is the Lord's, indeed. Please let me know where you are going from ———, for I would like to meet you soon once more. Will give a convention report to the class on Sunday in a talk as they wish it so much.

Very much Christian love to you all, with greetings in Jesus' name.

Bro. and Sr. F. G. S.—Wis.

YEAR TEXT FOR 1919

Stand Fast, therefore, in the Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free; and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.—Gal. 5:1

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER FIVE

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HARVEST WORK ENDED

The 15th verse of that same chapter (Rev. 14) refers to the Great Pyramid, the measurements of which confirm the Bible teaching that 1878 marked the beginning of the Harvest of the Gospel Age. The parallel, therefore, would establish DEFINITELY that the Harvest would close forty years thereafter; to-wit: in the spring of A. D. 1918. Z. '17, 293.

The Harvest of the Gospel Age, from 1878 to 1918. G. 418.

The Laodicean period of the Church extends from the fall of 1874 to the spring of 1918, three and one-half years of preparation, and forty years of Harvest. G. 58.

We believe that the end of the Harvest is here, April 1st 1918. Z. '18, 103.
That the harvest began in 1878, there is ample and convincing proof. The end of the harvest is due in the spring of 1918. Z. '18, 131.

The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society we believe was specially organized under the Lord's direction for the purpose of doing the harvest work of the gospel age, **AND NOTHING ELSE.** Z. '18, 94. See also Z. '17, 325.

Comment unnecessary . . . . Matt. 12:37

SUGGESTIONS

MEMORIAL CELEBRATION.

On Sunday, April 13 next, after 6 p. m., the beginning of the 14th day of Nisan, according to Jewish calculation, God's truly consecrated children who are following in the Master's footsteps and fully desirous of doing His will in the light of Present Truth, will celebrate the Memorial Supper. This season is especially sacred to Christians because it commemorates the death of the Lord Jesus and forcefully brings to mind that we are to die with Him as a part of His sacrificial Body—the Church—Eph. 1:22, 23.

SEE PAGE 14 FOR CONVENTION NOTICES.

The Door of the High Calling Closed Forever

The Laodicean Servant said, "We might multiply quotations from the prophets and apostles concerning the final return of God's favor to Jacob, or Israel after the flesh, after the selection of the FULL number for 'the body of Christ,' from the Gentiles, B. 217, that favor DID RETURN to the Jews about Passover, 1918, and they were then permitted to take over (to a certain extent) the Government of Palestine, is a matter of history. That this privilege could NOT have come to the Jews until AFTER the selection of the full number of the Bride of Christ, is a matter of Scripture. Surely this fact is sufficient, of itself, to show us that the Harvest is ended, and that the door of opportunity to enter the race for the Prize of the High Calling, is forever closed."

But further proof is given us in the time Parallels of the Jewish and Gospel Ages, about which Brother Russell said, "Of all the prophecies and time proofs there is none more striking and convincing than this one." B. 209. A careful study of the "Time Parallels" B. 209-248, (extracts from which are given in this issue) considered in the light of Brother Russell's last expression on the subject of chronology, Z. '16, 264 and G. 58-64, would be helpful to keep one's mind awake to the "time in which we now live."

In this respect it is interesting to hear that recently the Victoria, B. C. Ecclesia, witnessed an immersion service at which seven friends were immersed, symbolizing their consecration to the Lord, and their desire to have their sins washed away. These dear ones realize that they have not been accepted as members of the body of Christ, but rather as member of the Family of Christ. They believe that the Lord will be faithful to His Promise. Zeph. 2:3.—Seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger, and that they will be safely hidden away during the time of trouble, that they will be here to welcome the Ancient Worthies back and possibly be counted in with the Ancient Worthy Class.

We quote the following from the pen of Brother Russell: In view of the fact that the "high calling" is closed, and that, therefore, the consecrating one could not be fully assured of an opportunity to attain to the prize of the new nature and its glory, honor and immortality—what difference would this make in respect to the consecration? We answer that it should make no difference; consecration is the only reasonable, proper course for the Lord's people anyway;—full consecration will be required of those who would live and enjoy the blessings of the Millenial age—nothing short of it.

We may be sure that any consecrating and performing a full sacrifice of themselves in the interest of the Lord's cause after the heavenly class in complete, will find that the Lord has plenty of blessings of some other kind still to give; and that all of his blessings are for such consecrators, self-sacrificers. Possibly they may be counted in with the Ancient Worthies who had the sacrificing disposition that is pleasing to God, prior to the beginning of the "high calling." F. 156, 157.

Let us then teach PRESENT TRUTH to inquiring friends,—i. e., show them that the door of the High Calling is closed, but that, theirs is the privilege of Consecrating unto Life.

Published by the Stand Fast Bible Students, under the supervision of members of a committee of seven. F. McKercher, Chairman, Box 939, Portland, Oregon.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER FIVE

"They did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover—and the manna ceased—neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit (OLD CORN) of the land of Canaan (during) that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL. Z. '18:51.

What Brother Russell Said About

The End of the Harvest and the Closing of the Door of the High Calling

TIME PARALLELS

TYPE AND ANTI-TYPE—JEWISH AGE AND GOSPEL AGE

We come to the consideration of that most wonderful feature of this typical correspondency, viz., the time element, which in every instance sustains and corroborates the dates indicated by the Jubilees, the Chronology, and the foretold close of Gentile Times. And it is for this purpose particularly that this subject is here introduced—that the force of this wonderful parallelism may increase and confirm the faith of God's children in the time element of his plan, as it was evidently intended to do.—Heb. 9:9, 23; 10:1.

OF ALL THE PROPHECIES AND TIME PROOFS THERE IS NONE MORE STRIKING AND CONVINCING THAN THIS ONE. The lesson it teaches is startling because of its very simplicity, and carries conviction to the hearts of the humble. Not only were Fleshly Israel and its ceremonies typical, but the Jewish *age* was typical of the Gospel *age*. They are of exactly the same length, and correspond to each other; so that, seeing and appreciating the Jewish age, its length, and the pecularities of its harvest or close, we may know the exact length of the Gospel age, its antitype, and may understand what to look for, and when, in the harvest of the Gospel age. But let us now proceed to show this: for though we might take it for granted on general principles, and say that as the various features of the Jewish system correspond to those of the Gospel age, so too the *time* should correspond, yet God has not left us thus to *infer this,* but has clearly though indirectly told us so.

Paul tells us that God has cast off the Fleshly House from favor, during the time of the selection of the Spiritual House; and that *when the Spiritual House has been selected, then God's favor will return to the Fleshly House.* He says: "I would not, brethren (brethren of the Church, or spiritual Israel), that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel (natural, or fleshly) *until* the fulness (full number) of the Gentiles be come in. As it is written: There shall come out a Zion the (promised) Deliverer (the Christ—our Lord, the head, and the remnants or faithful few, of both the nominal houses of Israel, which shall compose his body, the Church) and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. And so all Israel shall be saved (for this is my covenant unto them) *when I shall take away their sins.* As concerning the Gospel (the high calling of this age,) they are enemies (cast off) for your sakes (that you may have the preference and inherit the choicest, the spiritual parts of the promises); but as touching the election (by which they were chosen to receive special earthly favors from God, promised to their Father Abraham and his natural seed), they are beloved for the (fathers' sakes); for the gifts and calling of God are not things to be repented of." What God has promised is sure of fulfilment. *Knowing the end from the beginning, Jehovah never made a covenant which he would need or wish to break.*

In this prophecy the Apostle gives an intimation of the length of the Gospel age, by showing that it began with the casting off of Fleshly Israel, and that IT WILL END WITH THEIR RESTORATION TO FAVOR.

Every fresh evidence of the removal of Israel's blindness, and of divine favor toward them, is, when measured by the Apostle's words, a fresh proof that the Gospel age is closing and that the "little flock" is about complete. But we have further proof which furnishes us with the *exact date* when favor should begin to return to Israel. Thus far we have merely seen that the measure of Fleshly Israel's *cast off* condition is the measure of the time of *special* favor to other, for the calling of other people (Gentiles) to be joint-heirs with Christ, which call ends in the beginning of the Times of Restitution; but not (other prophecies show) at the very beginning of it.

But now for the *exact date* of the return of favor to Israel, which marks the exact end of the heavenly *call*—from which date Israel will begin gradually to see, and to have increasing evidences of returning divine favor, and from which date also God's call to heavenly honors WILL CEASE, and only these already called will be privileged to win that prize by faithfulness to the close of life:—

Fleshly Israel, like Spiritual Israel, was called of God to be his peculiar people, a peculiar treasure unto him above all other people (the one an earthly treasure, and a type of the other, which is a heavenly treasure). Separated from the world, they were the recipients of special favor from God for eighteen hundred and forty-five (1845) years. This period began with the beginning of their *national life,* at the death of Jacob, the last of the patriarchs, when they were first recognized as a nation, and called "The Twelve Tribes of Israel," a national name. See Gen. 49:28; 46:3; Deut. 26:5. These eighteen hundred and forty-five years of national life and favor ended with their rejection of Messiah—A. D. 33—when, five days before his crucifixion, he presented himself to them as their king, and, not being received, declared, *"Your house is left unto you desolate."* (Matt. 23:38.) This, the end of the their favor, was the point of their fall, which continued for thirty-seven (37) years, and ended A. D. 70 in the total destruction of their national polity (*continued for 40 years and ended A. D. 73 in the total destruction of their national polity. See G. 62*).

And God's promised favor will not return to them as a people, to remove their blindness, and to lead them as a first-fruits of the nations into, earthly blessings, *until* the full number of the "peculiar people" have been called from the Gentiles—*until the fulness of the Gentiles be come into this higher favor.* . . . We might multiply quotations from the prophets and Apostles concerning the final return of God's favor to Jacob, or Israel after the flesh, AFTER THE SELECTION of the FULL number for "the body of Christ" from the Gentiles, but the student can do so by the use of a Concordance or a Reference Bible. Among the very pointed references to this favor to be restored to Israel, in the New Testament, is that by James, Acts 15:14-16, and by Paul, Rom. 11:26.

The period of their (Jewish) favor, from the commencement of their national existence at the death of Jacob, down to the end of that favor at the death of Christ, A. D. 33, was eighteen hundred and forty-five (1845) years; and there their "double" (*mishneh*)—the repetition or duplication of the same length of time, eighteen hundred and forty-five (1845) years, *without favor*—began. Eighteen hundred and forty-five years since A. D. 33 shows A. D. 1878 to be the end of their period of disfavor. A. D. 33 plus 1845—A. D. 1878.

All these prophetic points in the past are clearly marked, and we should expect some evidence of God's returning favor to Fleshly Israel ("Jacob") in or about A. D. 1878. This we do find, in the fact that the Jew is now permitted privileges in Palestine denied him for centuries past. And it was in that very year—1878 A. D., when their *"double"* was full, and God's favor was due to return to that people—that the "Berlin Congress of Nations" was held, in which Lord Beaconsfield (a Jew), then Prime Minister of England, was the central figure and took the leading part. There England assumed a general protectorate over the Asiatic provinces of Turkey, among which is Palestine; and the Turkish government amended its laws relating to aliens, which greatly ameliorated the condition of the Jews then residing in Palestine, as well as partially opened the door for others to locate there, with the privilege of holding real estate. Previously, the Jew was but "a dog" to be cuffed, kicked and abused by his Mohammedan ruler, and was denied the most ordinary privileges of existence, in the land sacred to him with memories of the past, and with promises touching the future.

But we must remember that the year A. D. 1878 was but the turning point of returning favor to Fleshly Israel. We have already learned, from our study of "The Times of the Gentiles," that Jerusalem and its people will continue to be trodden down—controlled and oppressed by the Gentiles—*"until* the Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled," and hence, though favor was due and began in A. D. 1878, the Jew will not be received back into *full favor* until after 1915, (*full favor as a nation until* 1918. *G.* 62). Thus their rise again to favor will be gradual, as was their fall from it. It is remarkable, too, that these two periods of their falling and rising are of exactly the same length—the falling was gradual, with increasing momentum, for 37 (*forty G.* 62) years, from A. D. 33, where their national favor ceased, to A. D. 70, (*A. D.* 73. *G.* 62) where their national existence ended, the land was desolated and Jerusalem totally destroyed. History thus marks the beginning and ending of their fall, while prophecy marks both ends of their rising—1878 and 1915 (1918, *G.* 62) showing an exact parallel of thirty-seven years (*forty years. G.* 62). This is a further part of their *mishneh* ("double") mentioned by the prophet.

Call to mind the Apostle's words which show clearly that they were cast off from divine favor, and from EARTHLY COVENANTS, STILL THEIRS, *UNTIL THE FULNESS OR COMPLETE NUMBER FROM THE GENTILES HAS COME IN*—until the *end of the Gospel call*—and then you will see that 1878 is a marked date, of deep interest to Spiritual Israel—no less important than to Fleshly Israel.

However, as none but our Lord Jesus knew the import of the end of the Law age and the beginning of the Gospel age (even the Apostles knew only in part and saw dimly until after Pentecost) so we can now expect only the body of Christ, anointed with the same spirit, to see clearly the ending of the Gospel age and its weighty import. The poor Jews and many professed Christians do not even yet know of the great dispensational change which occurred at the first advent—the ending of the Jewish age and the opening of the Gospel age. And likewise now, few know, or will come to know, until outward evidences prove it to their natural sight, that we are now in the end or "harvest" of the Gospel age, and that A. D. 1878 marked so important a point as it did. Nor was it intended that others than the faithful few should see and know, and not be in darkness with the world—"To you it is given to know," said our Lord. B. 209, 224.

THE CHURCH IN LAODICEA.

The Laodicean period of the Church extends from the fall of 1874 to the spring of 1918, three and one-half years of preparation, and forty years of Harvest. "The parallels affected merely the nominal Jewish House *there* and the nominal Christian House *here.* Both were rejected because of failure to be in the right condition of heart for the truths that were due to them—both rejected for destruction. The Jewish System was a Church-State affair, paralleled here by the great Church-State Systems of Europe, whose destruction began in 1914. Let us remember however, that the three and a half years of Jesus' ministry were more a time of preparation of the Apostles to be the instruments for the harvesting and a sharpening of the Sickle of Truth for the later work, which *began* at Pentecost. Prior to Pentecost, there was *no "garner"* into which to gather the wheat.

JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN PARALLELS

"JEWISH NOMINAL CHURCH	CHRISTIAN NOMINAL CHURCH
A. D. 29-33	A. D. 1874-1878

"They knew not the time of their visitation."

A. D. 33-36	A. D. 1878-1881

The Most Holy anointed, Divine favor prolonged for three and a half years to complete the 70 weeks of favor promised to Israel, their rejection being deferred.

"A. D. 36-73	A. D. 1881-1918

Because of the overspreading of abominations, He shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, or *utter destruction*—until all that God has pre-determined shall be accomplished.—Dan. 9:24-27."—Z. 16-264.

THE FOREGOING IS PASTOR RUSSELL'S LAST EXPRESSION ON THE SUBJECT OF CHRONOLOGY; AND WE BELIEVE THAT IT WAS DESIGNED TO BE OF GREAT VALUE TO THE LORD'S PEOPLE AT THIS HOUR. "The Apostles, the prophets and the angels all desired and sought earnestly to know what *time* the Spirit of God indicated through the Prophets. And this interest on the part of His children is ever pleasing to God. He called the inquiring Daniel, greatly beloved, and answered his inquiry so far as was consistent with His Plan. Such inquiry should not be regarded as an improper prying into the secrets of God. God would have us quickly discern the Truth as it becomes *due*." (B. 17) "Let none then, of the truly consecrated undervalue these prophetic time-evidences, which were designed to guide our words and deeds in the early dawn of the Millennial Day. These prophetic time-proofs were largely God's means of drawing the attention of the writer more carefully to other features of the Divine Plan." B. 31; G. 58, 59.

ISRAEL'S DOUBLE ACCOMPLISHED

WONDERFUL PROPHECY FULFILLED

Dispatches from Europe state that a commission of prominent Jews left London last month for Jerusalem, expecting to arrive at the holy city on March 27th, the date of the Jewish Passover. To all students of history this is indeed interesting news; but it is doubtful whether many are aware of the fact that this event was foretold by three of the great prophets of Israel and that the very date of this return of the Jews to Palestine as representatives of a nation—the day of the Passover, 1918—was indicated by their prophecies, when viewed with the sidelight of secular historic records. Surely we are living in momentous times; yet only a few realize that today the God of Israel is actually taking part in the affairs of men, particularly with reference to his chosen people.

It is a noteworthy fact that the Jewish prophets clearly foretold many of the experiences of the children of Israel, including even those of the present time and of the immediate future. Most Bible scholars have recognized that a large portion of the Old Testament was written particularly to the Jews and for the Jews, and that the world's history is more or less associated with this peculiar people. But all may not have noticed the exactness with which the Scriptures outline Jewish history.

In Romans 11:25 St. Paul informs us that God caused blindness, or "hardness," to happen to the children of Israel, until he had completed a certain work among the Gentiles, and had gathered from the Gentiles a sufficient number to fill up a pre-ordained class; and that at the completion of this selection from the nations his favor would return to the Jews, as mentioned in verses 26-28.

Notice, particularly, the following Scriptures: "For thus saith Jehovah, Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them." (Jeremiah 32:42). "Behold, I will bring them health and cure and I will cure them and reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth." (Jer. 33:6.) "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah." (Jer. 33:14.)

From Amos 3:2 we learn that God's dealings with earthly nations have been principally confined to the children of Israel, saying, "You only have I known (recognized as my people) of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." In Exodus 19:5 and Deuteronomy 14:2 we read that God chose this nation "to be a peculiar people unto himself above all the nations that are upon the earth." From Deuteronomy 28:15-29, we are informed that God told the Israelites that if they would not obey his laws he would cast them out of his favor. Jewish history of the last twenty centuries attests to God's faithfulness in carrying out his purpose.

By comparison of the statements of three of the most prominent of the Old Testament prophecies, we learn that the Passover of this very year, 1918, *is clearly indicated as a time for some special favor to be shown to the Jews.* God advises that he is carrying out a plan of his own (Ephesians 1:11), and that His plan was purposed from the beginning, (Eph. 3:11; Acts 15:18). In Isaiah 46-10, 11 we read: "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet accomplished, saying, My plan shall stand, and I will do all my good pleasure; . . . I have spoken it, and I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."

ISRAEL'S PERIODS OF FAVOR AND DISFAVOR EQUAL.

Jeremiah 16:13-15 reads: "Therefore I will cast you out of this land (Palestine) into a land that ye know not, neither ye nor your fathers: and there ye shall serve other gods (mighty ones, rulers) day and night; where I will not show you favor. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be said, The Lord liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt; but the Lord liveth that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north (the lands north of Palestine), and from all the lands whither he had driven them; and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers." Notice particularly the 18th verse, which says: "And first (before I do this) I will recompense (requite them for) their iniquity and their sin *double* (a repetition or counterpart in time); because they have defiled mine inheritance (my land)." This prophecy implies very strongly that God would grant Israel His special favor for a certain length of time, and that if they were not faithful he would then turn his face against them for an equal length of time, for "a double," or corresponding period.

Zechariah 9:9 reads: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." In verse 12 we read: "Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope; even *today* do I declare that I will render (literally, turn back) a *double* unto you."

A CRISIS IN JEWISH HISTORY.

Matthew 21:4, 5, identifies the incident mentioned in Zechariah 9:9; and our Lord's words in Matthew 23:37-39 identify Zechariah 9:12. Evidently, then, this is the beginning of the repetition count or *double,* the beginning of Israel's disfavor. Is it possible to locate the time when Israel's favor began? It is! The children of Israel were first recognized as the nation of Israel at the death of their father, Jacob, as recorded in Genesis 49:28. The children of Israel were in favor with God from that event down to the time when they were cast off by Christ.

The total length of Jewish favor from the time of Israel's first recognition as a nation to the time when Christ cast off that nation from divine favor was 1845 years. See Z. '18, 116 or B. 231, 232.

In Isaiah 40:2 the statement is made: "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare (marginal reading, *appointed time*) is accomplished (completed, filled out), that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hands *double* (a counterpart) for all her sins." This statement assures Israel that the time would come when her *double,* or time of disfavor equivalent to former favor, would be accomplished, and that then he would turn his face towards her again.

If the foregoing be true, then just 1845 years after their rejection by Christ (Matthew 23:37-39) we should expect some historic event indicating that divine favor was beginning to return to the Jews. Eighteen hundred forty-five years from the spring of 33, A. D., would bring us to the spring of 1878. We should, therefore, expect to find some occurrence in the early part of the year 1878, as an indication of returning divine favor. What can we find?

In June, 1878, the Berlin Congress assembled, Lord Beaconsfield (a Jew) was the chairman and the central figure, the dominating mind that changed the treaty of San Stephano between the Russians and the Turks, and so amended it that the Turks were to have suzerainty over Palestine and that the Jews were to be permitted some measure of liberty. This was the first act on the part of any of the nations of Europe to recognize in any way the Jews as a nation.

A REMARKABLE PROPHECY LITERALLY FULFILLED

Note Zechariah 8:23: "In those days it shall come to pass that ten men shall take hold out of all (manner of) languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying: We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you." It is a remarkable historic fact that this conference was attended by representatives from the following eleven nations: Great Britain, Russia, France, Italy, Turkey, Austria-Hungary, Germany, Greece, Roumania, Serbia and Montenegro. Thus there were *ten* representatives in attendance at that particular congress, in conference with the eleventh, a Jew. (See Berlin Conference, International Encyclopedia.)

But did God have anything to do with the raising of a Jew, Lord Beaconsfield, to the premiership of England, in order that he might fulfil this very prophecy, and in overruling that exactly ten other nations should be represented, and that the chairman should be the Jew? And did God have anything to do with the bringing about of that conference in the spring of 1878, exactly 1845 years after he had cast the Jews into disfavor? It is surely a remarkable coincidence, to say the least! The Lord's casting off of the Jewish people was in A. D., 33; but it was just 40 years afterward that the nation was completely destroyed, and it has not been recognized as a nation since that time until our day.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE JEWISH POLITY.

We quote as follows from Cornil's *History of the People of Israel*: "On the 15th of Nisan, i. e., of April, in the year 73 A. D., the first day of the Easter festival, the same day on which, according to tradition, the God of Israel had led His people out of Egyptian bondage into freedom, the last bulwark of Israel's liberty had fallen, and Israel was delivered into bondage."

We quote again from the *Jewish Encyclopedia*: "Masada attained great importance in the war with the Romans. . . . With the fall of Masada the war came to an end, on the 15th of Nisan, 73." Again from Morrison's *Jews Under Roman Rule;* "The capture of Masada, a Jewish fortress on the southwestern shore of the Dead Sea, put a termination to one of the fiercest struggles recorded in history (73 A. D.) Josephus also relates that Masada fell on the 15th of Nisan, April, A. D. 73.

THE COMPLETION OF THE DOUBLE.

The above quotations from standard authors show fully that the Jewish nationality came to an end just forty years after their rejection of Christ and their being cast off as a nation.

As the first sign of their rejection was the declaration of our Lord just before his crucifixion and was just 1845 years prior to the year 1878, would not their recognition at the Berlin Congress imply the first indication of God's returning favor to them again as a nation? If we are right in these conclusions, then just 1845 years after the spring of A. D., 73, we should expect some national recognition of the Jews as a nation. *Does it not seem peculiar at least that such a national recognition should occur this year* (1918) *exactly* 1845 *years to the month after their complete downfall? Does this not seem to imply to all reasoning students that divine providence is now taking a hand in the affairs of the nations? Would it be reasonable to account for all these exact correspondencies as merely coincidence—especially since we find them so accurately stated in His Word?*

The Apostle Paul in the eleventh chapter of his letter to the Romans declares that the falling away of the Jews from divine favor meant the passing of that favor to the Gentiles. Recall the expression in Luke 21:24: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the *times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*" Is it not reasonable to suppose that the returning of favor to the Jews means to some extent the withdrawing of that favor from the Gentiles? Romans 11:15. Z. '18, 115-117.

ZION'S TRIUMPH NEAR

"Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.—Hebrews 10:35, 36.

With bated breath and joyful heart the watchers in Zion behold the closing of the harvest. Next the dark night, followed shortly by the glorious sunburst of everlasting happiness. Wonderful is the present privilege of the faithful watchers. The graduating test is now upon the church.

By the words of our text St. Paul clearly proves that patience (cheerful endurance) is the final test, and that this test must come *after* we have done the will of God. What, then, has been and is the will of God for the members of Zion in the closing days of the age? During the past forty years the harvest of the age has been in progress. That the harvest began in 1878, there is ample and convincing proof. The end of the harvest is due in the spring of 1918. During the period of the harvest the will of God concerning his people finds expression in the words of the Master: "In the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn." (Matthew 13:30). In that time, according to his word, he has sent forth his messengers with a great sound of a trumpet, to gather his elect from one end of heaven to the other. (Matthew 24:31). Again God expressed his will concerning his people, saying, "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." (Psalm 50:5). Again Jesus expressed the will of our Father: "Thrust in thy sickle and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth (order-loving people) is ripe."—Revelation 14:15.

The sickle here mentioned is the message of Truth; thrusting it in means to send out the truth to those who hunger for it. Again God expressed his will concerning the called ones when he commissioned them to preach the good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God (Isaiah 61:1-3); and that this vengeance should be declared against Babylon. (Jeremiah 51:6). Jesus makes it clear that the latter part of the work of the harvest is the gathering of the vine of the earth. (Relevation 14:18). If, then, we see these things fulfilled and we have joyfully participated in the work of their fulfillment, we have been doing the will of God; and it is after thus doing his will that we must cheerfully endure before receiving the promise.

HOW FULFILLED.

It is doubtless true that every saint this side the vail who has a knowledge of present truth came to such knowledge of God's plan since 1878—the opening of the harvest work. At that time the church nominal was composed of both wheat and tares, true and false Christians. During the time of the harvest these classes must be separated. In outward appearance the two are much alike. The great Master had personally instructed that there should be no attempt at separation until the harvest time.

He himself has been present, directing the work of separating the two classes; and he has used various consecrated instruments as his messengers to do this work. The separating and gathering work has been accomplished with a sickle, which is the message of truth, and which necessarily must be understood by the consecrated. The thrusting in of that sickle of truth has had the effect of causing all denominations or religious systems to bind themselves together in bundles; thus uniting to oppose the message of truth. This binding together in bundles, according to the parable, must take place before the destruction of the tares. That these bundles have for some time been bound together cannot be gainsaid. The tacit union of the systems is complete, all together composing Babylon, mother and daughters. The doom of Babylon is sealed and has been announced. God has smitten her with plagues (Revelation 16:20, 21); and her destruction will follow shortly.

SEALING OF THE SAINTS.

During the entire forty years of the harvest the sealing of the saints progressed. A knowledge and appreciation of God's plan has served as both a sealing and a separating agency. To those who hungered and thirsted for the truth, God gave the satisfying portion; and those who appreciated it have been prompt in doing his will concerning them by gladly engaging in the harvest work. These heard the call, "Come out of Babylon," and joyfully obeyed, took up the trumpet and engaged in sounding forth the message of the kingdom.

The great Master of the harvest, through St. John, shows that this sealing is in the forehead and must be accomplished before the storm of destruction breaks upon Babylon. This seems clearly to indicate that every one who will be of the kingdom class must have a knowledge and appreciation of God's plan by the end of the harvest. If the harvest has ended, then the sealing is complete. *The evidence strongly indicates that all the saints are sealed.* This would mean that all the saints have been gathered into the "barn"—into the condition of separateness from the world.

Concerning this point, the Laodicean messenger wrote: "When this night cometh, when the reapers *must* cease their labors, it will prove that this final work of the Gospel age is accomplished; that the elect number of the Bride of Christ have all been 'sealed,' and 'gathered' into a condition of separateness from the worldly—into the barn condition; for God will not permit anything to put an end to his work until it is finished. Then all the true and faithful servants of God will have been sealed in their foreheads; and, the work of the Gospel age being finished, no more can enter into that work or reap its rich reward." C. 211, 212.

PLAGUE OF HAIL.

It has heretofore been shown (Z. 1918-119) that the first born of Egypt pictured or represented the clergy of Christendom, claiming to be the first ones of importance in the systems. The exposition of the prophecies of Ezekiel and Revelation in "The Finished Mystery" shows to the world that the clergy are not what they have claimed and think themselves to be. THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY which contains the article on "The Fall of Babylon" is likewise a pointed message directed against the same class. In the picture, the angel that smote the first-born of Egypt passed through the land about midnight; and, as heretofore suggested in THE WATCH TOWER, "about midnight" in the antitype would apply to about January 1, 1918.

On December 30 and 31, 1917, and Janaury 1, 1918, approximately 10,000,000 copies of the above mentioned issue of THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY—the message against Babylon, and particularly the clergy of Babylon—were placed in the homes of the people of the

United States and Canada. This was like a great hailstorm, and brought to the attention of the people the fact that Babylon is not what she claims to be. Nothing has so angered Babylon as this. Twenty-seven years before that "hailstorm," the Laodicean Messenger wrote:

"After the truth, which Babylon now begins to regard as her enemy, and as calculated to accomplish her destruction, shall have become more generally known and widely circulated; after 'the hail' has to a considerable extent swept away the refuge of lies; and after the now smoldering and menacing hatred of the truth is thereby roused to an opposition so violent and so general as to effectually stop the further progress of the great work in which the saints are engaged," will be "the approximate time of the deliverance or 'change' of the last members of the body of Christ." C. 231, 232.

MANTLE OF ELIJAH.

After Elijah smote the Jordan with his mantle, he crossed over with Elisha; and while the two walked together on the other side, Elijah was taken up by a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha then took up the mantle of Elijah, that had fallen from him, and went back over the Jordan. It seems quite reasonable that the mantle represented the message of truth which the Elijah class has possessed throughout its journey during the harvest period. (Psalm 91:4). Elijah had this mantle with him all the way from Gilgal to the Jordan. Elijah and Elisha stood at the Jordan, talking; then Elijah wrapped up his mantle and smote the waters. This means to explain the waiting period from 1914 to 1917, when the smiting of the antitypical Jordan began by the message "wrapped up for the slaughter." (Ezekiel, 21:15). "The Finished Mystery" contains the message of truth in brief, compact form, specially directed against Babylon. It was used particularly from the latter part of 1917 to the spring of 1918.

About the middle of March, 1918, the distribution of "The Finished Mystery" was suddenly stopped. The suggestion does not seem unreasonable that, "The Finished Mystery" being the mantle, the quantity of these printed and not distributed will be used by the Elisha class for a second smiting of the waters (peoples).

HAS THE HARVEST ENDED?

The saints need not be disturbed by the suppression of the message against Babylon. *This is not man's work, but the Lord's work.* God has permitted it to be interrupted for some good purpose and will overrule it to his own glory. The Scriptures indicate that such a course would be taken. In 1891, the faithful messenger of Laodicea, discussing this point, said:

"When repressive, restrictive and coercive measures are thought to be necessary, such measures will probably include not only labor organizations and the publications which advocate their rights and wrongs, but also such others as point out the plan of God, and the real cause and only remedy for the great distress of the nations. Yes, the time is probably not many years distant, when repressive measures may be brought to bear against every effort of the saints to spread the good news of the coming kingdom, all on the plea that the general interests and the public welfare demand such a course.

"Thus would be fulfilled the predictions of the Second Psalm, and probably in the end with more bitterness than can now well be imagined, though it has been partially fulfilled upon the Head of the body. Acts 4:25, 29.

THE DOOR CLOSING.

The door—which, by the way, our Lord calls a gate—represents the way of entrance into a certain condition or privilege (Luke 13:24, 25). In this instance it represents entrance into the race for the prize of the heavenly calling to joint-heirship with Christ Jesus in his kingdom. That door opened at Pentecost. It must be closed some time. It must remain open until all the "wise virgins" have been sealed in their foreheads. While open, it means that those who enter have the blessed privilege of sacrificing and suffering with Christ Jesus, which suffering is not ordinary suffering, but such suffering as results from faithfully walking in the footsteps of the Master in loving devotion to the cause of righteousness and in joyfully defending the truth, which is unpopular, and in exposing errors which are popular. It means a zealous and energetic promulgation of the truth as we have opportunity, at all hazards. It means to be true, loyal and faithful to the Lord under all conditions, even unto death. Such privileges are the greatest ever afforded to any creature. The ceasing of such privileges to any and all persons would seem to mark definitely the closing of the door. "The night cometh when no man can work." (John 9:4). That time will mark the closing of the door. Discussing this point, the last messenger to the church said:

"There are three ways in which the closing of this door might be indicated: First, by a definite Bible statement of the exact date; second, by such a reversal of public sentiment with reference to the truth that fidelity and zeal in its service would no longer meet with opposition, and when suffering with Christ for the truth's sake would be no longer possible; or, third, by such a condition of affairs obtaining in the world that all opportunity for such service would be effectually obstructed, thus leaving no opportunities for candidates to enter into the work and to develop and prove their love and faithfulness by their activity and endurance. . . . We have a clear intimation that *the door will be shut* in the manner last named; for, before the Millennial day breaks, we are forewarned of a dark night wherein no man can labor." C. 207, 208.

"The closing of the 'door,' in the parable of Matthew 25, marks the full end of all opportunity for any, even of the 'called' ones, thereafter to attain the prize of the high calling. It marks the end of all opportunity to prove worthy of the prize by faithfulness in the service; all opportunity for service will there terminate in the 'night' wherein no man can work." C. 213.

PATIENCE PERFECTING HER WORK.

Let no one slack his hand as long as any opportunity for proclaiming the truth is afforded. Remember the words of the Apostle: "Ye have need of patience (cheerful endurance), that after ye have done the will of God ye might receive the promise." The will of God is that we do all in our power to give testimony to his glorious character and coming kingdom. Having done this, we must wait and behold the salvation of the Lord, patiently biding his time to call us home. The Apostle Paul, again speaking to the church, says: "Having done all, stand." Ephesians 6:13. This clearly indicates that THE LAST OF THE FEET MEMBERS MUST STAND A WHILE AFTER THE DOOR IS CLOSED, stand, letting patience perfect her work; waiting until the Lord Jehovah shall deliver us. Some will be required to stand in enforced idleness for a time, despised and rejected of all men, deprived of opportunities to labor either for the production of the necessities of life or in testifying of the kingdom. Let us remember in this connection the words of the Master: "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." (Matthew 24, 13.)

Nearly twenty years ago, the faithful Laodicean messenger wrote:

"How long the Lord may be pleased to let his saints stand in enforced idleness so far as his work is concerned, we do not know, but probably only long enough to let faith and patience have their perfect work. Here these virtues will be most fully developed, tested and manifested. This test of patience will be the final trial of the church. Then, "God will help her, at the dawning of (her) morning" (Psa. 46:5-Leeser) not the morning which is to dawn on the world at the brightness of her rising with Her Lord as the sun of righteousness, but at the dawning of her morning, in which she is to be changed to the nature and likeness of her Lord. Her morning is to precede the Millennial morning." C. 230, 231.

TRIUMPHANT ZION.

Having made a consecration unto death, the child of God understands that he must die before he can gain the promised prize. "Ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes" (Psalm 82:7). The journey of the consecrated has not been one strewn with flowers. It has not been one of ease. God permitted it to be otherwise, in order that by trying experiences a strong, firm, crystalized character might be developed. The last of the feet members have come to a very trying time in the church's history. Poor, bruised and dispised ones: misunderstood by all in the world, persecuted, ridiculed, the victims of scoffers, charged as violators of the law and denounced as the off-scourings of the earth. And yet they have pressed along and are still pressing along the narrow way! No one appreciates them; indeed, none except the consecrated can appreciate them. But how beautiful they are and how wonderful their privilege! They are highly honored and esteemed by the Lord himself and greatly loved by him—not because of their own merit, but because of faithful, loving, devotion to duty and to his cause. Z. '18, 131-135.

THE PEACE OF GOD

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.—Phil. 4:7.

Peace is defined to be a state of quiet, or tranquality, freedom from disturbance or agitation—calmness, repose. Such a state of mind our text affirms of God. His is a mind of tranquil, calm, undisturbed, never agitated, nor even wearied nor perplexed by any of the cares of His vast dominion. Yet this perfect peace of God, the Scriptures show, is due neither to the fact that there are no disorders in His vast domain, nor yet to any stoical indifference to pain or pleasure, but rather to that perfect poise of His glorious attributes which makes Him Master of His situation as Sovereign of the whole universe.

The scope of His mighty intellect reaches to the *utmost bounds of possibility,* comprehends all *causes* and discerns with precision all *effects;* consequently He knows the end from the beginning, and that, not only from philosophical principles, but also by *intuition.* As the Creator of all things and the originator of all law, He is thoroughly acquainted with all the intricate subtleties of physical, moral and intellectual law, so that no problem could arise the results of which are not manifest to His mind. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." 1 John 1:5.

God, the Creator of all things, is also the competent Sustainer of all things. In silent grandeur, from Age to Age, the whole physical universe fulfils His will, without a suspicion of disorder or mishap; and the same Power is pledged for its sustenance throughout the eternal future.

Thus from His own vast, inherent resources of Power and Wisdom, springs the peace of God. But not from this source alone is the Divine peace; for peace if the certain concomitant of inherent goodness. God is the impersonation of every virtue and every grace; and consequently He has the blessed satisfaction and peace of conscious moral perfection as well as inherent Wisdom and Power.

GOD'S EMQTIONAL NATURE.

Yet we find this peace of God coexisting with much of disorder and trouble. As a Father He shows us that He bears a father's love to all His intelligent creatures—"the whole family (of God) in Heaven and in Earth"—and that for His "pleasure they are and were created." (Eph. 3:15; Rev. 4:11.) He created them in His own likeness —with the same mental and moral attributes, so that He might have communion and fellowship with them as sons, and they with Him as a Father, that thus, in mutual fellowship and communion, the Creator and the creature might find pleasure, happiness and delight.

This likeness of God includes in all not only the same mental faculties, but also the free exercise of the same in the formation of character. A creature incapable of thus forming character would not be in God's likeness. And for the purpose of developing character, the alternative, of good and evil must be placed before him. The right and the wrong principles of action must be discerned and the individual left free to his own choice in the matter, that the pleasure of God may be realized in the virtuous character resultant from the free choice of righteousness.

Since the love of God for His newly created and innocent creatures is akin to, but much stronger than, the love of an earthly parent for an innocent infant; and since that loving interest and solicitude does not grow cold as the creature advances in years, but earnestly watches for the development of the principles and fruits of righteousness, it is manifest that, like an earthly parent, God experiences the sense of either pleasure or pain, according as His free, intelligent creatures choose the right course or the wrong. Of this we are fully assured, not only by thus reasoning from the fact of His Fatherhood, but also by all of those Scriptures which speak of some things as abominable, displeasing, hateful and despicable to Him and as giving Him no pleasure; which say that His anger burns against them, and that His indignation and wrath wax hot, even to their destruction. Other Scriptures speak of His pleasure, love, joy, and delight in pleasing things—in the principles of righteousness and those who obey them—the appreciation of pleasurable emotions of an opposite character, for pain and pleasure may properly be considered the ebb and flow of the same emotion.

These exhibitions of the mind of God indicate clearly an emotional nature in the Divine Being, of which fact we might also judge from the realization of our own emotional nature, since man was created in God's image. No, dear friends, God is not a God of stoical indifference, insensible to the emotions of pleasure and of pain; but the perfect poise of His attributes preserves the equilibrium of peace under all circumstances, whether of pain or pleasure.

GOD'S PEACE UNBROKEN BY EXTERNAL DISCORD.

With this thought, then, let us consider the circumstances under which the marvelous Peace of God has been perpetually maintained. The deep-laid Plan of God in all His creative works required long *aions* (ages) for its accomplishment. Across the vista of ages He saw in His purpose the glory of an intelligent creation in His own likeness, established in righteousness and worthy of His gift of eternal life. He therein saw the mutual pleasure of the Creator and the creature, and with a peaceful patience He resolved to wait for the glorious consummation.

As the Plan developed and time rolled on, the free moral agency of His creatures, misused by some, was enabling them to develop evil characters. By this means discord was introduced into His family—"the family (of God) in Heaven and in earth"—all His creatures, angels and men; and the family was divided some holding to righteousness and some choosing to do evil. But such a contingency was one of the foreseen necessities of the far-reaching Plan, the glorious outcome of which, was in the Divine judgment, worth the cost of all the trouble and loss which He foresaw.

What a dreadful thing is family discord! How a prodigal son or a wayward daughter often brings the gray hairs of the human parent down with sorrow to the grave! Ah, the Heavenly Father knows something of such sorrow; for He saw Satan, one of His sons (Isa. 14:12), an angel of light, fall as lightning from Heaven. (Luke 10:18.) For six thousand years, at least, that son has been in open defiant rebellion against God, and most actively and viciously engaged in inciting further rebellion and wickedness. He saw many of the angels leave their first estate (Jude 6) and become the allies of Satan, and then He say also the whole human race fall into sin. Did ever any human parent find such a conspiracy—so virulent and hateful—spring up in his family? Surely not!

Then God found it necessary to perform the unpleasant duties of discipline. In His Justice He must disown the disloyal sons and deal with them as enemies. Though all the while His Fatherly Love was preparing to bless the deceived and fallen ones when the purposes of redemption should restore the repentant to His favor, Love must be veiled, while only stern, relentless Justice could be manifested. This has been no happifying duty, nor has the attitude of the sinner been pleasing to Him.

Consider the Love against which these recreants sinned. Though from God cometh every good and perfect gift, His favors have been despised, His love spurned, His righteous authority conspired against and defied, His character maligned, misrepresented, made to appear odious, hateful, unrighteous and even despicable. Yet, through it all the peace of God continues, and for six thousand years He has endured this contradiction of sinners against Himself. And still, O wondrous grace! His love abounds; and it is written that He so loved the world, even while they were yet sinners, that He gave His Only-Begotten Son to die for them; and that through Him judgment (trial) is also extended to those angels that fell, with the exception of Satan, the leader and instigator of the whole conspiracy—the father of lies. John 3:16; 1 Cor. 6:3; Jude 6; Heb. 2:14; Rev. 20:10, 14.

GOD'S PEACE COMPATIBLE WITH SORROW.

This gift of Divine Love was another indication of the cost to our Heavenly Father of His great and marvellous Plan. Not only did He behold the fall into sin of a large proportion of His family, but their recovery cost the sacrifice of the dearest treasure of His heart, and the subjection of this beloved One to the most abject humiliation, ignominy, suffering and death. Again the illustration of a parent's love assists us in comprehending the cost of this manifestation of Jehovah's Love. With what tender and yearning emotions of Love must He have made this sacrifice of His beloved Son, in whom He was well pleased! In addition to all the graces of character manifested since the very dawn of the being of the Logos, was now added the further grace of full submission to the Divine will, even when the pathway pointed out was one of humiliation and pain.

Ah, did the Father let Him go on that errand of mercy without the slightest sensation of sorrowful emotion? Had He no appreciation of the pangs of a father's love when the arrows of death pierced the heart of His beloved Son? When our dear Lord said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," and again, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt," did it touch no sympathetic chord in the heart of the Eternal? Yea, verily; the unfeigned love of the Father sympathetically shared the Lord's sorrow. Matt. 26:38, 39.

The principle taught in the Divine Word, that true love weeps with those that weep and rejoices with those who rejoice, is one which is also exemplified in the Divine character. The immortal Jehovah could not Himself die for us, His Divine nature being proof against death. And even if He could have died, there would have been no higher power to raise Him out of death. Thus all creation would have been left forever without a Governor, and only disaster and ruin could have ensued. But God could and did sacrifice at great cost to His loving, fatherly nature, the dearest treasure of heart; and thus He manifested (1 John 4:9) the great Love wherewith He loved His deceived and fallen creatures. If this sacrifice cost Him nothing, if it were impossible for His mind to realize any painful emotion even under such a circumstance, then the gift of His Son would be no manifestation of His love; for that which *costs* nothing, *manifests* nothing.

Our Lord Jesus also manifested His great sympathy for the Father in the misrepresentation of His character which He has so patiently endured for ages. It was the one effort of His life to glorify the Father and to rectify among men the false impressions of His glorious character—to show to men His goodness, benevolence, love and grace, and to lead them to love the merciful God, who so loved them, even while they were yet sinners, as to seek them out and to plan for their eternal salvation.

GOD'S PEACE SELF-CENTERED.

Yes, there has been great commotion in the disrupted family of God—commotion in which the Lord declares He has had no pleasure (Psa. 5:4); but, nevertheless, *the Peace of God* has never been disturbed. In the full consciousness of His own moral perfection, His unerring Wisdom, His mighty Power, and with the fullest appreciation of Justice and the keenest and most ardent love of the beauty of holiness, patiently and peacefully, and even joyfully in the midst of tribulation, He has endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself for six thousand years.

But during the seventh millennium, according to the Divine purpose, it will be the joyful privilege of our Lord Jesus fully to manifest to all creatures in Heaven and in earth the Father's glorious character. Then will the Father rejoice in the grandeur of His finished work and in the everlasting peace and happiness of His family in Heaven and on earth, "reunited under one Head." Eph. 1:10—*Diaglott.*

This blessed consummation will not be realized, however, until the incorrigible fallen sons of God, disowned and disinherited because they loved unrighteousness and would not be reclaimed, shall have been cut off. This will be the last unpleasant duty of the Creator and Father of all, who positively declares that it is a sad duty, yet nevertheless one which He will have the fortitude to perform in the interests of universal righteousness and peace. Hear Him: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why *will ye* die?" Ezek. 33:11.

Thus we see that the Peace of God is compatible with great commotion and with sorrow and pain of any kind; for it is not dependent upon outward circumstances, but upon the proper balancing of the mind and the conditions of a perfect heart. Such peace—the Peace of God—was enjoyed also by our Lord Jesus in the midst of all the turmoil and confusion of His eventful earthly life. And this brings us to the consideration of our Lord's legacy to His disciples, when He was about to leave the world, as expressed in His own words:

"Peace I leave with you, *My* peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth (in stinted measure or in perishable quality), give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 14:27.

OUR LORD'S LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT.

Thus with abounding compassion and tenderness, did our Lord, on the last night of His earthly life, bestow upon His beloved disciples His parting blessing, His legacy of *Peace*. It was the richest legacy He had to bequeath, and was one of priceless value. It was the promise of that tranquility of soul, that rest and ease of mind, which He Himself possessed—the *Peace of God*. It was the same peace which the Father has Himself always enjoyed, even in the midst of all the commotion which the permission of evil has brought about; but it was *not derived* from the *same source*. In Jehovah this peace was *self-centered;* He realized in *Himself* the omnipotence of Power and Wisdom; while the *peace of Christ* was centered, *not* in Himself, but in *God,* by faith in His Wisdom, Power and Grace. So also if we would have the *Peace of God,* the peace of *Christ*—"My peace"—it must, like His, be centered in God by faith.

Yes, the peace of Christ was a priceless legacy. Yet how quickly the stormcloud of trouble, which was even then growing very dark, burst in its fury upon the heads of those very disciples to whom the words were directly addressed. It followed almost immediately the gracious bequest, and struck consternation, bewilderment, confusion, to their hearts and shook their faith from center to circumference. Then, where was the peace? While the Lord was speaking the words, the foul betrayer, Judas, was out on his murderous errand. Then followed the agony in Gethsemane, and the terror and consternation among the disciples as they began to realize the fate of their beloved Lord. Soon their almost breathless suspense deepened into more fearful forebodings as He stood alone before His merciless accusers and persecutors in the Hall of Pilate and the Court of Herod, while they were powerless to shield Him. Then came the tragic end—the horrors of the crucifixion.

WHAT HAD BECOME OF THE PEACE?

Where was the promised *peace* under such circumstances—when, overcome with fear and dread, they all forsook Him and fled; and when St. Peter, although anxious to defend Him, was so filled with fear that *three times* he denied his Lord and with cursing declared that he never knew Him? The explanation is, that the *peace* had not yet *come;* for as the Aspostle Paul tells us, "Where a *testament* is, there must also of necessity be the *death* of the *testator*. For a testament (a bequest) is of force *after men are dead;* otherwise it is of *no strength at all* while the testator *liveth*." (Heb. 9:16, 17.) But as soon as the tragic scene was over and the cry, "It is finished," fell upon their eager ears, strange as it may seem, there is evidence that *peace* began to steal into their grieving hearts. The darkened heavens, the quaking earth, the rending rocks, the torn veil of the Temple—all spoke to them a message of comfort which the world could not receive.

To the world (Jews and Gentiles, both participating in the crime) the language of these events was that of Divine wrath and indignation against them. And as fear fell upon the people, and the clamor and excitement of that awful day died away, they smote upon their breasts and returned to their homes. The Roman centurion and they that were with him, fearing greatly, said, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

But to the disciples of the Lord these events spoke a very different language. The cause of their blessed Master was *their* cause and it was *God's* cause. To them these supernatural demonstrations were evidences that God was not regarding this matter with indifference; and though through the veil of darkness they could not read His bright designs, in these events there was to them a whisper of *hope*.

Three days later hope was revived by the news of our Lord's resurrection, confirmed to them by His appearance in their midst. Again forty days later hope was strengthened by His ascension after His parting counsel and blessing and promised return, and the instructions to tarry in Jerusalem until they received the promise of the Father, the Comforter, the Holy Spirit of adoption, not many days thence—at Pentecost. Then the peace of Christ, the Lord's rich legacy, began to be realized, and the tarrying days of prayer and expectancy were days of abiding peace—peace which flowed as a river. But when on the day of Pentecost the promised Comforter came, the river of their peace found a deeper bed; and their joy knew no bounds!

> "Like a river glorious is *God's perfect peace,*
> Over all victorious in its glad increase.
> *Perfect;* yet it floweth *fuller* every day;
> *Perfect;* yet it growth *deeper* all the way."

OUR RICH LEGACY OF PEACE.

But not alone to the early Church was this legacy of peace bequeathed. It is the blessed inheritance of the entire Church, even to the end of the Age. *The Lord showed His thought for us all* on that very day, when in His prayer He said, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for all those who shall believe on Me through their word." John 17:20.

The peace promised, observe, is not the short-lived peace of the world, which is sometimes enjoyed for a little season—while fortune smiles and friends abound and health endures, but which quickly vanishes when poverty comes in and friends go out, when health fails and death steals away the treasures of the heart. "My peace," the peace of God which Christ Himself by faith enjoyed, who, though He was rich, for our sakes became poor, who lost friend after friend, and in His last hour was forsaken by all of the few that remained—His peace endured through loss, persecution, scorn and contempt, and even amidst the agonies of the cross. This peace is something which none of the vicissitudes of the present life can destroy, and which no enemy can wrest from us. What richer legacy could the Lord have left His beloved people? . . . . Blessed be God, His rich legacy of peace still *abounds* to His people!

The peace promised is not such as the world can always recognize and appreciate; for the possessor of it, like the Lord Himself, and like the Heavenly Father as well, may have a stormy pathway. Indeed, that it must be so to all the faithful until the purposes of God in the permission of evil are accomplished, we are distinctly forwarned, but with the assurance that through all the storms this peace shall abide—"In the *world* ye shall have tribulation, but *in Me* ye shall have peace."

FAITH, THE BASIS OF PEACE.

If we would know the foundation and security of this abiding peace which is able to survive the heaviest storms of life, we have only to look to the teaching and example of the Lord and the Apostles. What was it that held them so firmly and gave them such rest of mind while they suffered? It was *their faith*—their faith in the Love, Power and Wisdom of God. They *believed* that what God had *promised,* He was able also to *perform,* and that His righteous and benevolent Plan could know no failure. By the mouth of His Prophets He had declared, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure. . . . Yea, I have *spoken it* and I will *bring it to pass;* I have *purposed* it, I will also *do it.*" "The Lord of Hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannual it?" (Isa. 46:9-11; 14:27.) On the assurances of God they rested. In Him their faith was anchored; and it mattered not how fiercely the storms raged or how they were tossed by the tempests of life while their anchor still held fast to the Throne of God.

The language of our Lord's faith was, "O righteous Father, the *world* hath not known Thee; but *I* have known Thee." He had been with the Father from the beginning, had realized His Love and His goodness, and had seen His Power, and had marked His righteousness and His loving kindness and Fatherly providence over all His works. And so it is written, "By His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities." (Isa. 53:11.) The knowledge which He had of the Father gave to him a firm footing for faith in all God's purposes concerning the future. Hence He could and did walk by faith. And that faith enabled Him to overcome all obstacles and to secure the victory even over death.

So also it is written for our instruction—"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our *faith*"—that faith in God built in our case, upon our Lord's testimony of the Father; and again it is written that, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." It is only through steady, unwavering faith that the peace of God—the peace of Christ—will abide with His people. While the Lord was with His disciples, and they saw in Him the manifestation of the Father, their faith was strong and they had peace *in him,* as he said, "While I was in the world I kept them." But not until after He had left them was their faith anchored *in God.* After Pentecost they experienced the same peace that Christ had enjoyed—the blessed peace that came from a knowledge of the fact that God acknowledged them as sons and heirs, and joint-heirs with Christ, if they would continue faithfully to follow in the steps of the Redeemer.

CULTIVATION OF UNWAVERING FAITH.

Herein is also the basis of our peace. No matter how fiercely the storms of life may assail us, we must never let go our anchor and allow ourselves to drift, but always remember that "the foundation of God standeth sure"; that "His Truth is our shield and buckler"; that "What He has promised He is able also to perform," notwithstanding our human imperfections and frailties; that covering these we have the imputed righteousness of Christ, our Surety and Advocate; and that "the Father Himself loveth us, He considereth our frame and remembereth that we are dust," and so has compassion for the sons of His Love and is very pitiful and of tender mercy. Indeed, "What more can He say than to us He hath said," to assure our faith and to steady and strengthen our hearts to patient endurance in the midst of the trials and conflicts of the narrow way of sacrifice.

There is nothing which puts the Christian at greater disadvantage in the presence of his foes than for him to let go, even temporarily, his grip upon the anchor of faith. Let him do so for a moment, and of necessity darkness begins to gather around him. He cannot see the brightness of his Father's face; for "without faith it is impossible to pleace God"; and while he grapples again for the anchor, the powers of darkness fiercely assail him with doubts and fears. These attacks are generally based upon his human imperfections, which he should ever bear in mind are covered by the Robe of Christ's righteousness.

If we would have the peace of God reign in our hearts, we must never let go our anchor, "nor suffer Satan's deadliest strife to beat our courage down." The language of our hearts should always be, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." With this faith the peace of God, the peace which the Master bequeathed to us, ever abides. Thus "the peace of God which passeth all understanding will keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus"; for it is written again, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee."

In the midst of the Christian warfare let our hearts be cheered and our minds be stayed not only with such assurances that all the Divine purposes shall be accomplished, but also with such promises of personal favor as these:

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him; for He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust." "Can a woman forget her sucking child? . . . Yea, they may forget; yet will I not forget thee. Behold I have engraven thee upon the palms of My hands." "The Father Himself loveth you," and "It is the Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." "Such as are upright in their way are His delight." "Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart"—the peace of God, even in the midst of storm and tempest. Z. '13, 227, 231.

GOD'S PERFECT PEACE.

Like a river glorious in God's perfect peace,
Over all victorious in its glad increase.
Perfect; yet it floweth *fuller* every day;
Perfect; yet it groweth *deeper* all the way.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.

Every joy or trial cometh from above,
Traced upon our dial by the Sun of love.
We may trust Him solely, all for us to do;
They who trust Him wholly, find Him wholly true.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.

KERNELS

LET US, THEN, HAVE FOR OUR WATCHWORD, "LOYALTY" TO GOD AND TO THE PRINCIPLES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS; and let each of us write upon his heart the gracious promise—"The Lord will give strength unto his people." Let us be faithfully "his people," and let us earnestly desire and faithfully use the strength promised. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will dot it"; "He is faithful that promised."—1 Thess. 5:24; Heb. 10:23.

So then, if you lack the strength or the peace promised, the fault is yours, not God's. Either you have not the interests of his service closely enough at heart, or else you do not make use of the strength he provides. "The Lord will give strength unto his people (his trusting, faithful servants, those who are using to his praise the talents consecrated to their Master, however many or few these talents may be); the Lord will bless his people with peace."—Z. '11:151.

The Lord's people are to understand that their safety is not dependent upon human power. Z. '11:24.

From our own experience we would consider the proper thought to be, "Have I lived today as best I knew how, and are the accounts right with the Lord, and is there anything that I can do better tomorrow than today, in the light of the experiences of today? Can I be wiser, can I be stronger, can I be more self-sacrificing?" When we are doing the best we can do, we are to know that the Lord does not expect more than that of us. Z. '10:296.

Later on, the foolish Virgins came to the "door," but found it forever shut. They lost the great prize. They were foolish in that they did not give attention to getting the oil in time; foolish also in that they cared too much for the things of this present life; but they were Virgins, nevertheless. Z. '10:313.

How deceitful is this old heart! How specious are its false reasonings! How many have proven this to their sorrow! How many have been inveigled and had the new mind captivated by the old! How many have found themselves brought into bondage by the deceitfulness of the old heart! One of the favorite arguments is that the New Creation is commanded, "So far as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." This general advice of the Apostle it seeks to exalt far above his design, and to make it superior to the divine command (1) that we shall love and serve, honor and obey, the Lord with all our heart and all our mind, soul and strength; and (2) that we shall love our neighbors as ourselves. This does not permit of peace at any price. If the old heart, the old mind, the old will, can get the new one to make a *compromise* of truth or duty for the sake of peace, there will be no end to the demands it will make; and the result will be that the New Creature would soon, in the interest of peace, be violating the very essence of his covenant with the Lord. F. 601, 602.

The fate of the Church then, so far as her human career is concerned, seems outlined in the closing pages of the lives of Elijah and John the Baptist, already referred to. The beheading of the one, and the whirlwind and fiery chariot which bore away the other, probably indicate violence to the last members of the body of Christ. Yet Zion need not fear; for God is in the midst of her, and will help her. Her consecration is unto death, and her privilege is to prove her faithfulness: "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be *as* his master, and the servant *as* his lord."—Matt. 10:24, 25. C. 231.

Jesus declared, "Whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after Me, cannot be My disciple." It is not enough that we should start out with a courageous intention, a bold acknowledgement of Jesus, and a bold profession of discipleship. After we have been faithful in taking our stand on the Lord's side, we must be proven. Not merely those who have a little enthusiasm at the beginning, but those who shall demonstrate their worthiness by their faithfulness will be accounted worthy, and will be finally accepted by the Lord. Z. '14, 91.

As the Jews profaned the name of the Lord by careless living amongst the Gentiles, so there is great danger of Christians profaning His name by careless living. And this is indicated in the Scriptures as being a danger. Z. '14, 55.

"By their fruits ye shall know them." Men do not gather grapes off thorn bushes or figs off thistles. *A good spring will not send forth bitter water.* We are, therefore, to judge ourselves as to whether or not our conduct is in harmony with the principles of righteousness; and we may similarly assist in judging one another as respects outward conduct, leaving the judgment of the heart to the individual himself and to the Lord. Z. '15, 45.

The fully consecrated believer in Jesus may receive of the Holy Spirit, and this more and more abundantly as he comes into glorious touch and relationship to the Lord in thought and word and conduct. But any neglect of the divine teachings or principles in the exercise of self-will in opposition to the recognized will of God, is sure to that extent to quench the spirit of holiness, the spirit of a sound mind, the Spirit of God, which is in no wise forced upon us, but must be entertained, must be held on to, must be desired if it would be retained and increased. Z. '06, 58.

As Saul feared to bring upon himself the reproaches of the people, fearing to be thought too narrow on the one hand and too wasteful on the other, so a temptation comes to the Lord's people to guide their course not entirely by the Word of the Lord, but with a deference to the sentiments of others. This is the fear of man that brings a snare. (Prov. 29:25.) Z. '08, 217.

The walk of the world is on the broad road; the walk of the Church is on the narrow path. As we progress in Christian experience, we find this path getting farther and farther away from the broad road which the world is traveling. Z. '08, 184.

"The Lord knoweth them that are his," and it is also true that those who are his know him. "He goeth before them and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice and a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers." The voice of the Lord is the voice of justice, or truth and of love, and all who are his sheep are expected to be able to discriminate between his message and the various false messages which more or less particularly represent the Adversary, who seeks to mislead the flock, using human instrumentality to accomplish the purpose. We have the Lord's assurance that none of the true sheep will be satisfied with the false Gospel; it will not appeal to their hearts, and equally we have the assurance that the true sheep will be satisfied with the true Gospel, because it will satisfy their longings as nothing else will do. This is an important point to keep before our minds. It indicates to us the importance of becoming fully, truly, emphatically the Lord's sheep, of entering into covenant relationship with him and thus making sure his protecting care and instruction. Z. '08, 94.

In what respect are we tempted as was our Lord in this final temptation? We reply that similarly the adversary comes to us with suggestions respecting a compromise of the Truth. As the eyes of our understanding open to see to what extent evil has a dominating influence in the World, and that fidelity to the Truth will cost us all that we have, in that same proportion usually comes the suggestion to compromise, to try to accomplish the good by more or less fellowship and partisanship with the evils that are in the world. Z. '06, 44.

There have been seven messengers to the Church. It seems certain that the Lord purposed their messages as a guide for the Church. We believe that we are within the bounds of propriety and taking the position which the Lord is pleased to have us take when we say that in the examination of important questions due consideration should be given to what Brother Russell as the messenger to the Laodicean Church wrote on the subject. Such a position is not deifying the man, but giving due consideration to the Lord for the message which He sends us. That Brother Russell was not infallible all will admit; but he being the messenger to the Laodicean Church and being a profound student of the Scriptures his expressions should be very closely scrutinized and given careful consideration at this time. Z. '18, 5.

We have now come down to the end of the present Order, and severe and subtle are the temptations and testings which must be undergone to prove our entire loyalty to the Lord and to the Covenant which we have made with Him.

"Jesus, loving Savior, only Thou dost know
All that may befall us as we onward go;
So we humbly pray Thee, take us by the hand,
Lead us ever upward to the Better Land."
Z. '16, 69.

It will be *our own fault* if we miss the Kingdom. There will be no blame to attach to the Lord; for He has arranged for our continual cleansing day by day. His grace is provided for us at every step of the way; and His loving, protecting providences are continually about us if we are trustful and obedient to the best of our ability. Z. '16, 213.

God is permitting these very siftings, in order to sift out all who are not overcomes, and to test and MANIFEST THE LITTLE FLOCK, who like Gideon's band, will, though FEW in number, share the victory and honors of their Captain in glory.

Are you prepared for the issue, dear brethren and sisters? The armor of Truth has been given you for some time past; have you put it on? Have you made it your shield and buckler, your defense, against all the wily arts of the Evil One? . . . .

Aptly indeed did the Prophet liken this infectious poison to a pestilence. (Psalm 91:6). A pestilence spreads because people are in a physical condition which renders them susceptible to disease. Physicians say that those whose systems are in good, healthy order are in little danger of any disease. In like manner a spiritual pestilence will flourish, not only because all will be exposed to it who have not a clear intellectual appreciation of the doctrines of Christ, but from another cause also. Out of the heart are the issues of life; therefore the most needful of all things to be in right condition is the *heart*. How is your heart? Is it proud, boastful, independent, selfconscious, self-willed? If so, take care; you will be very liable to this epidemic, no matter how far from it you may seem to be.

"A heart resigned, submissive, meek,
My great Redeemer's Throne,
Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone."

With such a heart you are safe. Z. '16, 175.

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation"—that "your minds be not corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Let all the meek fully awake to the trial of the hour. And while many are putting stumbling-blocks in the way of the "feet" of the Body of Christ, let each soldier of the Cross be vigilant, not only to stand, but to assist others to stand (fast)—*bearing up* the "feet."—Psalm 91:11, 12. Z. '16, 175.

Remember Lot's wife.—Luke 17:32. We may reasonably suppose that her turning and looking back toward Sodom implied a heart not fully in harmony with her deliverance, but in some degree sympathetic with what she was leaving. She at heart clung to the *accursed things condemned to destruction* and was loath to give them up. Therefore the Lord brought her no further. She became a monument of the folly of sympathizing with evil, and evil-doers, after God has given them up. Z. '16, 261.

PACIFIC COAST CONVENTIONS.

Upon the return of the "Comforters" from the East, arrangements are being made to hold the following series of conventions on the Coast:

Los Angeles, Calif., March 28th to 30th, inclusive.
Address communications to J. W. Adams, 900 E. 7th St., Long Beach, Calif.

Oakland, Calif., April 1st and 2nd.
Address communications to Mrs. C. D. McCray, 965 Jackson St., Oakland, Calif.

Portland, Ore., April 3rd to 6th, inclusive.
Address communications to W. S. McChesney, 104 E. 27th St., Portland, Ore.

Victoria, B. C., April 18th to 21st, inclusive.
Address all communications to Geo. Sellars, Oakland P. O., Victoria, B. C., Canada.

INTERESTING LETTERS

Dear Brother:

Several pieces of your literature (Stand Fast Bible Student Association) have been received, and I thank you very much for mailing the same to me. When I read them through, I thought it was another split in the church, but did not pay very much attention to it and put the literature aside; but when other literature came, I looked into the matter very carefully, with the result that I was convinced of your stand and believe as you do.

I have not been satisfied with the I. B. S. A. since last September, and especially with the affairs of our own ecclesia. We (wife and I) have noticed a growing lack of the spirit of Christ and especially among the elders a rapid increase of the spirit of Babylon; so much so, that Sister ——— and I have decided to withdraw from the I. B. S. A.

We both have greatly enjoyed the fellowship of the friends of the ——— ecclesia. But oh, how different the affairs of the ecclesia are now! But, as our dear Pastor warned us what was liable to happen, we should not be disappointed but rejoice, and we do rejoice that we can see the truth and "come out of her."

We are thoroughly convinced that there is considerable "wheat" in the —— Ecclesia, and have been wondering how or what is the best method to adopt to get the "wheat." We are praying over the matter and have put ourselves completely in our dear Lord's hands to be used in any and every way He chooses, and believe He will direct us what to do. We can have meetings in our home. We have quite a large house, as Brother ——— will perhaps remember. He spoke in our home on his last visit to ——— to about two hundred and twenty-five of the ——— friends, so we believe we can accommodate all of the "wheat" here. Have you any suggestions to offer? Are there any others of the ——— friends or friends in nearby cities who have written to you and are favorable? We would be pleased to get their names, so that we may all get together. Would also like to have the names of all to whom you have sent literature who have not written to you at all, or who have written unfavorably.

A few days ago I wrote a letter to Brother ——— in care of you, but since writing to him have been studying the matter carefully and feel sure of our stand.

We are inclined to believe that the "Watch Tower" will continue for some time to come, as the official organ of the Great Company Class after the Little Flock has passed away. On page 357, Vol. 7, chapter 6, verses 1 and 2, we read: "My Beloved—The foolish virgin class now fully aroused to the facts, explain to the Lord's professed children in nominal Zion." So, a publication of some kind may be necessary.

May the Lord bless you and guide you in your new work in helping the other body members to stand.

Your Brother in Christ,

Signed, J. S. D. E.—, Mass.

My Dear Brother in Christ:

Your lovely letter received, also telegram. How glad we were to hear from you. We attended every meeting of the convention and words fail to express our gratitude and thankfulness to our dear Heavenly Father for all His goodness and kindness to us in sending those dear "comforters" to us. Our hearts are simply overflowing with thanksgiving.

We have enjoyed a continued love feast from Thursday evening until ten o'clock last night. We had the very great pleasure of having six of the dear brethren for dinner at our home last Thursday evening and again, yesterday from one o'clock noon to ten o'clock last night.

It has been the *grandest* experience of our lives. Those dear brothers radiate the spirit of Christ continually and this is what we missed in the I. B. S. A. meetings. A great cloud seemed to be passing over the I. B. S. A. and the darkness was (and is) increasing. We were beginning to be at "sea" but now we have located ourselves by the assistance of those dear "Comforters," and the Heavens were opened to us again and the goal is clearly in sight. Sr. E. and I. are determined to stand fast and reach that wonderful goal.

Our hearts are so full that we feel like writing a long letter but we must not take up so much of your consecrated time. We will always remember all of the dear "Standfasters" in our prayers.

May the dear Lord richly bless you dear Brother and all associated in your grand mission. Please remember us in your prayers as we will pray for you.

Your brother and sister in Christ, J. S. D. E.—, Mass.

Dear Brother, loving greetings:

How our poor hearts are rejoicing here as we get a more perfect view of the present situation, an a deeper appreciation of the wonderful position we hold.

The dear ones are just *beaming with delight.* I have never seen anything like it.

How we rejoice and give thanks to our dear loving Father that he sent those dear "Comforters" to us in an hour of so much need! "Comforted?" Oh, dear ones, our souls have mounted up on eagles' wings. *Eagles they were who came to us.* The deepest expression of all here seems to be: "How can I give due honor to my dear Lord and due praise to His precious name?"

Can you bear our love to those dear ones again? Tell them that we have learned to fly, and that even if they should fall, we would fly on and on and on.

Dear Brothers: You can never know while you are here what a precious comfort you have been to us.

You will never waver, dear ones, but go right on to the end, for the way is beautiful, grand, sublime.

Yours with confidence and love in Him. (Ps. 133.)

C. W. B.—, Mo.

Dear Brethren:

We have just closed the great convention at ———, in some respects the most wonderful yet. Sunday, there were one hundred or more present and the majority Standfasts. What a sight it was. There are no words to express the joy. The dear friends here are getting in three days what we on the coast got in three months. You can imagine how they rejoice and we rejoice with them.

We organized last night with about twenty. We think the class will reach about thirty or more. Some very strong Standfast characters here.

May the Lord richly bless you all.

Yours by His Grace, R. O. H.

Dear Brother:

Greetings in the name of our dear Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and also in the name of His consecrated and sealed saints.

When you were with us, I promised to write you and let you know how I was standing.

Dear Brother: I rejoice to tell you tonight that I have cut myself loose from everything earthly and am serving my Lord singly and alone, and worship and adore only Jehovah God my Father.

I am so glad that you were sent to us just when you were, for it was the due time and my Heavenly Father knew that I could accept the truth then if ever. I shudder now to think how near I was to dying to a place in the glorified priesthood. Oh, how thankful I am that I was pulled out of the fire; and, dear Brother, the Lord used you as the messenger of light. To all eternity I shall be grateful to you for your brotherly kindness to me and your sacrifice on my behalf.

How wonderful to know how very near the dear Lord we are!

Give my love to Brothers ——— and all the saints.

I wish I could be with you in ———, but it is not possible for me to leave home at this time.

Sister ——— joins me in this.

With love in Christ,

Brother and Sister H.—, Wisconsin.

Dear Brethren in Christ:

DON'T STOP THE "CORN GEMS"

The mists are cleared away. My bewilderment since the May 15th and June 1st Towers came out was cleared away at the convention of the "Stand Fast Bible Students," when everything was made so plain that I knew positively that the Lord was not using the Watch Tower any more as the "channel." I was so happy that I couldn't wait to get home that I might see some dear ones on the way and at home. I started for home Wednesday, stopping at ———. The Lord heard my prayer and opened the eyes of a dear sister there who was receiving the "Corn Gems" but was almost afraid to read them. He has opened the eyes of another here.

Thank you for the help and comfort the "Gems" bring to us.

Yours in the one hope, MRS. W. F. L.— Wis

STAND FAST PRINCIPLES

The Great Master warned that, straight is the gate and narrow the way that leads unto life and that few would ever find it; and experience shows that fewer are disposed to walk therein after they do find it, for it is too narrow—it is the way of self-denial and SELF-SACRIFICE. It is the way our Lord walked in loneliness; and we are called to walk in His footsteps. No one can "STAND FAST" without so doing.

PRINCIPLE is defined as a "fixed rule of action." "STAND FAST BIBLE STUDENTS" therefore are "firm, unmovable, knowing that their toil is not unfruitful in the Lord." These prayerfully and conscientiously observe the Principles laid down by our Lord and confirmed by His Apostles. Their teachings form the "rule of action" of their daily lives. From these they steadfastly refuse to turn, come what may, ever bearing in mind that ONE is their Master and Him they would obey, whatever the cost. They know no other Master and use only the Liberty that comes from Him, their Head. Observance of such Principles of necessity leads to carefulness of conduct and to examination of motives, which are the mainspring of actions.

Therefore the teachings of the Lord and His Apostles, the CHANNEL of all Divine Truth, become their inspiration, their comfort and the source of their strength and consolation. Likewise all those of the "NARROW WAY" are careful to note and follow the precepts and practices of "THAT FAITHFUL SERVANT." Upon these they place consistent construction, and from the same they will not deflect; though others waver, they will not, they Stand Fast, but never use their liberty for a cloak.

Knowing their God, "Stand Fast Bible Students" consequently honor their Head by hearty obedience to His commandments. They would lift the "Royal Banner" high, that the poor world, through their lives, their courage and their loyalty, MIGHT SEE their Lord and Saviour.

The Principles for which these are so resolutely standing, are those set forth in the Scriptures, and so fearlessly, vigorously and uniformly advocated by "That Faithful Servant," and until the summer of 1918 were held to by all the adherents of the I. B. S. A.

Hence "STAND FAST BIBLE STUDENTS" are different.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER SIX

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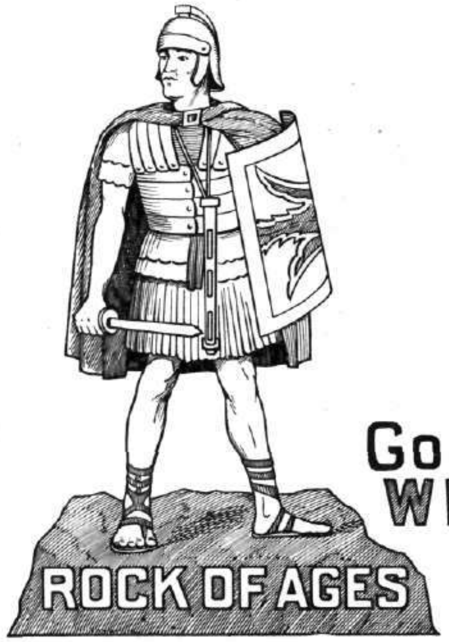

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God that ye may be able to WITHSTAND in the evil day and having done all to STAND.

SUGGESTIONS

PACIFIC COAST CONVENTIONS.

Upon the return of the "Comforters" from the East, arrangements are being made to hold the following series of conventions on the Coast:

Victoria, B. C., April 18th to 21st, inclusive.

Address all communications to Geo. Sellars, Oakland P. O., Victoria, B. C., Canada.

Tacoma, Wash., April 25-27, inclusive.

Address all communications to Clarence R. Johnson, P. O. Box 1377, Tacoma, Wash.

A Few Thoughts on 'Love.'

Many, not understanding the principles which underlie the greatest of all graces "LOVE," have spoken unkindly of the Stand Fast Bible Students. They accuse the Stand Fast Bible Students of "judging" and of not having love in their hearts. OLD CORN GEMS No. 4 showed—that according to Brother Russell, there are many things that should be judged today. In fact that a Christian would be unfaithful to his covenant if he did not "judge who is on the LORD'S side and who is *NOT*. See Z. '11:120.

OLD CORN GEMS No. 6 contains several articles written by "that servant" on the subject "LOVE," which clearly teach, that, 'Love is not soft sentimentality," but has for its underlying principle, absolute strict obedience to the Word of God, as the Apostle John says. "The love of which I am speaking consists in our living in obedience to God's commands. God's command is that you should live in obedience to what you all heard from the very beginning." (2 John 6, Weymouth). So then we believe that those who do not now live in obedience to what they heard from the beginning, but have turned to other ways and broader views do not truly comprehend what God given LOVE really is, and are therefore in no position to pass judgment on those who are still sincerely endeavoring to live close to the Master and to OBEY HIS commands in all things.

Dearly beloved. Many deceivers have gone out into the world—keep guard over yourselves, so that you may not lose the results of your good deeds, but may receive back a full reward. No one has God, who instead of remaining true to the teaching of Christ, presses on in advance, (after new light), but he who remains true to that teaching has both the Father and the Son. If anyone who comes to you does not bring this teaching, do not receive him under your roof nor give him welcome. (2 John 8-11, Weymouth). Let us take heed to this warning, sounded by the Apostle John, His words are surely applicable TODAY, for in the LAST DAYS PERILOUS TIMES SHALL COME. (2 Tim. 3:1).

NO CROSS, NO CROWN.

"The purple grape must be crushed
To make the sweet, red wine,
And furnace fires must fiercely burn
The drossy gold to refine;
The wheel must cruelly grind,
Else where the jewel's light?
And the steel submit to the polishing,
Or how would the sword grow bright?

"How, then, my soul, wilt thou
The Spirit's fruits possess,
Except thou lovingly yield thyself
To the Hand that wounds to bless?
Then patiently let the fire
Consume all earthly dross—
THOU CANST NOT HOPE TO WEAR
THE CROWN
IF THOU REFUSE THE CROSS!

Z., '14, 269.

Published by the Stand Fast Bible Students, under the supervision of members of a committee of seven. F. McKercher, Chairman, Box 939, Portland, Oregon.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER SIX

"They did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover—and the manna ceased—neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit (OLD CORN) of the land of Canaan (during) that year." *Joshua* 5:11-12.

THE COMING MEMORIAL SUPPER

"This do in remembrance of Me."—I Cor. 11:24, 25.

The supper which our Lord instituted as a remembrancer of His great sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world, is striking in its appropriateness and its simplicity. The world's great men have always sought very different means of perpetuating their memories. In whatever way they would remind their followers of their merits and their greatness, it surely has not been by a reminder and commemoration of their death—especially if, as in our Lord's case, it was a death of ignominy and shame, a death as a malefactor and criminal. Another, more probably, would have left instructions for medals to be struck commemorating some of his mighty words—such, for instance, as the awakening of Lazarus, or the stilling of the tempest on the sea, or the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, while the multitude strewed the way with palm branches, and cried, Hosanna to the King!

But our Lord chose as His remembrancer that which represented what was, in His and God's estimation, His mightiest work—His Sin-Offering on our behalf; and that which His real followers, and they alone, would appreciate more than any other feature of His mission. True, His followers would have appreciated something commemorative of His wonderful words or works, but the worldly also could have appreciated those things. But not so the value of His death as our *Ransom-Sacrifice,* the basis of our reconciliation and at-one-ment, which has never yet been fully apprehended by any but the consecrated Little Flock—the Elect. And it was for these that the remembrancer was arranged and instituted. And though a Judas was present, he was given a sop, and went out from the others before the supper was ended; thus no doubt representing that in the close of this Age, before the Little Flock will have finished their part of having fellowship with their Lord in His sufferings, the sop of Truth will have become so strong as to drive forth from the company and communion of the faithful all who do not *rightly appreciate and value the Ransom* accomplished by the Lamb of God for the taking away of the sins of the world. 1 John 2:19.

DATE OF THE PASCHAL SUPPER.

The date of the Paschal Supper at which the Jews ate a lamb, commemorative of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage and of the sparing of their first-born at that time, was of course calculated by the Jewish method of reckoning time, viz., lunar time. (Exod. 12:2-14). Instead of dividing the months as we do, they allowed the new moon to mark the beginning of a new month; and the difference between the sun time (solar time) and the moon time (lunar time) was equalized by always beginning the new year with the appearing of the new moon about the Spring Equinox. In celebrating their religious festivals the Jews still maintain this method of reckoning. And since our Lord, the Apostles and the early Church followed this same rule for determining the date for the annual celebration of our Lord's Last Supper, we also follow it.

The first new moon after the vernal Equinox is reckoned in Hebrew almanacs this year (1919) as being (March 31st)—probably Jerusalem observation. At 6 P. M. the day before begins the first day of the Jewish month Nisan, the first month of the Jewish sacred year. Beginning with the first of Nisan the Hebrews counted, and on the tenth day the Paschal lamb was chosen or selected from the flock. On the fourteenth day (the *full* of the moon) "between evenings" (at any time between 6 P. M. of the 13th and 6 P. M. of the 14th of Nisan) the lamb was to be killed and eaten. On the fifteenth day their Passover Feast began, lasting seven days, the first and the seventh days being observed specially holy, as Sabbath days, or "high" days. (Exod. 12:16). On the sixteenth day, the omer of the first-fruits of the barley harvest was offered to the Lord, and fifty days after (Pentecost Day) they offered before the Lord two wave loaves.—Lev. 23:17.

These things done by the Jews every year were, as we have already seen types of greater and grander occurrances. The choosing of the lamb on the tenth day typified how, if Israel would be blessed and recognized as the Church of the First-born in the antitypical Passover, they must accept Jesus *then,* five days before that Passover Feast, and four days before His crucifixion. And it evidently was on that very date that our Lord offered Himself finally to that nation—when, as their King, He rode into the city on the colt. (Compare John 12:12-16). They, however, neglected to receive the Lamb of God, were at once rejected, and ceased from being the typical first-born.

The 14th day which this year [1919] will begin at six o'clock on the evening of Sunday, April 13th, and last until six P. M. of the 14th) was the day in which the Paschal lamb was to be killed and eaten; and the Hebrew counting of time (doubtless Divinely arranged for this very purpose) permitted the eating of the "Last Supper" upon the same day that the Lord was crucified. The Passover supper of lamb and herbs and unleavened bread (fulfilling the Law, which was not ended until the cross) was eaten shortly after six P. M. Then followed the institution of the Memorial Supper of bread and wine, representative of the body and blood of the antitypical Lamb. This thereafter, as often as the occasion returned (yearly), was to be observed by His followers instead of the eating of the literal lamb—as the commemoration of the antitypical Lamb and the greater passing-over of the antitypical First-born, which His blood effects.

The waving of the barley sheaf of first-fruits, on the 16th of Nisan ("the morrow after the Sabbath" or Passover Feast of the 15th—Lev. 23:5, 6, 11, 15-17), typified the resurrection of Christ our Lord, as "the first-fruits of them that slept." 1 Cor. 15:20.

The two wave loaves offered on the fiftieth day, Pentecost, represented the presenting of the Church before God and its acceptance through the merit of the great High Priest, indicated by the anointing of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The Church really is but "one loaf." (1 Cor. 10:17), the *two* loaves representing the same thing as the *two* goats presented on the Day of Atonement. It indicated that although all presented were acceptable to God through Christ Jesus, He yet knew that all presented would not come up to the condition of faithfulness to the end. The two loaves represented therefore, the two classes of the consecrated—the overcoming Little Flock, and the Great Company of the consecrated servants of God who do not make the "high calling" theirs, by overcoming the world as they might and should do.

The method of calculating the date for Good Friday and Easter Sunday in vogue among Episcopalians and Roman Catholics differs from the foregoing in this: They celebrate as Easter Sunday the first Sunday following the first full moon after the Spring Equinox, and the preceding Friday is recognized as Good Friday. This method of counting was instituted by the Council of Nice, A. D. 325, as instead of the Jewish method which we recognize. But the name "Passover" continued to be used (not Easter Sunday) for a long time! It was after Papacy had become established in political influence, and the ignorant pagans began to flock to the system which enjoyed the favor of the Government, that the name "Easter" was substituted for "Passover," because about the same time as the Passover the pagans had been in the habit of celebrating the festival of their Easter goddess (Germanic Ostara)—*Estera*—goddess of Spring. This was one of the many methods adopted by an ambitious "clergy" for gaining numbers and influence.

Sometimes the two methods of counting, Jewish and Roman Catholic, indicate the same days, but not often; occasionally their results are nearly a moon or month apart.

The Jews will celebrate the Passover *week* as a *"feast"* beginning (this year April 15th, at 6 P. M., April 14th) the 15th of Nisan. We in the Memorial Supper do not celebrate the feast-week, but the day previous, the 14th of Nisan, beginning on the evening of (April 13th, 1919), which is the anniversary of the proper date for killing and eating the Paschal lamb—the anniversary of the death of our Lord Jesus, the true Lamb of God, because of whose sacrifice the "Church of the First-born" passes from death unto life—to be completed in the First Resurrection. The antitype of the Passover Feast—week is found in the rejoicing of heart of all the First-born of true Israel—the seven days signifying the *perfection* or completeness of the joy and the salvation.

We have given the details as to the counting as a general answer to many questions on this subject, and not because of any weighty importance or bondage attaching to the exact anniversary day. We recognize no such bondage upon those made free by Christ. For though desirous of observing the Memorial Supper properly, upon its proper anniversary, as intended by our Lord when He said, "This do ye (every time you celebrate this yearly memorial) in remembrance (*lit.*, for commemoration) of Me." We esteem it more as a privilege than as a duty; and if we should err in the matter of selecting the day, through ignorance or misunderstanding, we believe the Lord would accept our good intentions and forgive the error and grant His blessing.

YE DO SHEW FORTH THE LORD'S DEATH.

"For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you—that the Lord on the night in which He was delivered up took a loaf, and having given thanks, broke it and said, 'This is that body of Mine, which is broken on your behalf; this do ye in My remembrance.' In like manner also, the cup, after the supper, saying, 'This sup is the New Covenant in My blood; this do ye, as often as ye may drink, for My remembrance.' For as often as you may eat this bread or drink this cup you declare the death of the Lord till He come."—1 Cor. 11:24-26.

The Apostles declare that He spoke of the death which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. This one and only death of our Redeemer is what is symbolized by this remembrancer—His body, His *flesh,* broken for us, and of its merits and life all who would have life everlasting must partake. "Let no man deceive you by any means," on this important question.

But as water-baptism is not the important baptism, but only the symbol representing the real, so partaking of the emblematic bread and wine is only the symbol of the more important feast—our appropriation of the merit of Christ, which secures to us eternal life through His broken body and shed blood. Thus by faith accepting His finished sacrifice, and by similar faith, as instructed by Him, appropriating to ourselves all the merits and perfections and rights which the Man Christ Jesus possessed and laid down in death for us, we really *feed* our hearts upon the Bread of everlasting Life, the Bread which God sent to us from Heaven. This is the true Bread, the eating of which gives everlasting life. This is, primarily, what the *literal bread* symbolizes and signifies to all who partake of it rightly and intelligently. It is a memorial of the *ransom* of Adam and his family from the bondage of sin and death.

THE BREAD AND THE CUP.

Another thought: The bread was unleavened. Leaven is corruption, an element of decay, hence a type of sin, and the decay and death which sin works in mankind. So, then, this symbol declares that our Lord Jesus was free from sin, a Lamb without spot or blemish, "holy, harmless, undefiled." Had He been of Adamic stock, had He received His life in the usual way from any earthly father, He, too, would have been leavened with Adamic sin, as are all other men; but His life came unblemished from a higher, Heavenly nature, *changed* to earthly conditions; hence He is called "the Bread from Heaven." (John 6:41). Let us then appreciate the pure, unleavened, undefiled Bread which God has provided, and so let us eat of Him by *eating* and digesting the Truth, and especially His truth—*appropriating* to ourselves, by faith, His Righteousness; and let us recognize Him as both the *Way* and the *Life*.

The Apostle, by Divine revelation, communicates to us a *further* meaning in this remembrancer. He shows that not only did the loaf represent our Lord Jesus, individually, but that after we have thus partaken of Him (after we have been *justified* by appropriating His righteousness), we, by *consecration,* become associated with Him as part of the one, broken Loaf—food for the world. (1 Cor. 10:16). This suggests the thought of our privilege as justified believers to share now in the sufferings and death of Christ, the condition upon which we may become joint-heirs with Him of future glories, and associates in the great work of blessing and giving life to all the families of the earth.

This same thought is expressed by the Apostle repeatedly and under various figures, but none of them more forceful than this, that the Church (which is Christ's Body, see Col. 1:24), with their Head, is the *"one loaf,"* being broken, during the Gospel Age. It is a striking illustration of our union and fellowship with our Head.

We quote: "Because there is *one* loaf we, the many (persons) are *one* body; for we all partake of the one loaf." "The loaf which we break, is it not the *participation* of the body of the Anointed One?"—1 Cor. 10;16, 17.—*Diaglott.*

The "fruit of the vine" represents the sacrificed life given by our Lord. "This is My blood (symbol of *life given up in death*) of the New Covenant, shed for many FOR

THE REMISSION OF SINS." "Drink *ye all* of it." Matt. 26:27, 28.

It was by the giving up of His life as a *Ransom* for the life of the Adamic race, which sin had forfeited, that a *right* to LIFE may come to men through faith and obedience, under the New Covenant. (Rom. 5:18, 19). The shed blood was the "Ransom (price) for ALL," which was paid for all by our Redeemer Himself; but His act of handing the cup to the disciples, and asking them to drink of it, was an invitation to them to become *partakers of His sufferings,* or as St. Paul expresses it, to "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (Col. 1:24). It was the offer to us that if we, after being justified by faith, voluntarily partake of the sufferings of Christ, by espousing His cause, we will be esteemed by God members of the Body of Christ, as well as sharers in the sufferings of Jesus. (2 Tim. 2:12; Acts. 9:1-5). "The cup of blessing, for which we bless God, is it not a *participation* of the blood (shed blood—*death*) of the Anointed One?" (1 Cor. 10:16.—*Diaglott*). *Would that we all might realize the value of the "cup," and could bless God for an opportunity of sharing with Christ His "cup," of sufferings and shame! All such may be assured that they will be glorified together with Him. Rom.* 8:17.

Our Lord also attached this significance to the "cup," indicating that it signified our participation in His dishonor, our share in His sacrifice—the *death* of our humanity. For instance, when asked by two of His disciples for a promise of future glory in His throne, He answered them: "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of *the cup that I shall drink of?*" On their hearty avowal He answered, "Ye shall indeed drink of My cup." The juice of the grape not only speaks of the crushing of the grape till blood comes forth, but it also speaks of an after refreshment; and so we who now share the "sufferings of Christ" shall shortly share also His glories, honors and immortality—when we drink the *new* wine with Him in the Kingdom.

"TILL HE COME."

What is the full significance of this expression?

Since our Lord who instituted the Memorial Supper placed no limit upon its observance, this expression by the Apostle is not to be understood as limiting the length of time in which it will be appropriate to commemorate the death of our Lord Jesus, our Ransom-Sacrifice, and our consecration with Him to sacrifice. Rather, he is showing that it was not to be considered a limited arrangement, for a few years, but was to be continually observed until the Lord's Second Coming. Looking down to and speaking of the Second Coming of our Lord, the Apostle includes in his expression the gathering and exaltation with Christ of His Church, or Kingdom, to rule and bless the world. This is even yet a common and proper way of speaking of matters so closely identified and so dependent one upon the other. The Christ, Head and Body, is *coming,* to rule the world in power and great glory. The presence of the Lord or Head is necessary first; then comes the change of the sleeping members of His Body, the sifting of the living members, and their gradual gathering together unto Him.

Even though the Kingdom may be considered as *begun* from the time the King began the exercise of His great power (Rev. 11:17) in 1878, it will not be *"set up"* in the full sense of the word, until the last member of the Kingdom has been changed or glorified—until the breaking of the *Loaf,* The Christ, Head and Body, is completed. While one member suffers, the body suffers; while one member is unglorified, the Kingdom is not fully come into power and dominion.

It is the Coming of Christ, as *including the full exaltation of His Church or Kingdom,* that the Apostle evidently meant when he said, "As often as you may eat this (Passover) bread and drink this cup, you declare the death of the Lord (as your hope and confidence) till He come." The same thought of the Kingdom glory being the *end* of the symbol may be gathered from our Lord's own words on the occasion of the institution of the Memorial—"I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that Day when I drink it new with you in My Father's Kingdom." —Matt. 26:29.

And surely, if it were ever proper and expedient for those who believe that our Lord's death was the Ransom-Price to confess it—to *show it forth* as the basis of all their hopes—it is now, when this foundation doctrine of God's Word is being traduced and misrepresented.

APPRECIATING THE PRIVILEGE.

We urge that none neglect this annual privilege, for any reason. There is a special blessing in its observance. If you incline to feel discouraged, go partake of the broken loaf, asking the Lord for a fresh realization of your justification, and a fresh appreciation of your consecration to be broken (sacrificed) with Him, as members of the one Loaf —His Church, His Body.

Let us not forget that the Memorial is meaningless or worse unless accepted and appreciated. But let nothing hinder us—neither sins, nor coldness, nor feelings of unworthiness. Go to the Lord and make a clean breast of all your shortcomings. Go to your brethren, or any whom you have wronged—make full acknowledgement, whether they acknowledge faults toward you or not. *Get yourself right with your Lord, and so far as possible with every man, and then eat—yea, feast* upon the rich provision the Lord has made for all who accept, now or in a later "due time."

Such a heart-searching and cleansing, we remember, was shown in the Passover type given to the Jews. Before they gathered to eat their Passover Lamb they searched everywhere throughout their habitations, for anything containing leaven or putrefaction, bones, crusts, everything. These all were burned—destroyed. So must we fulfill the antitype, and "put away the old leaven" of anger, malice, hatred, strife. 1 Cor. 5:7, 8.

But remember that this kind of leaven of sin cannot be thoroughly put away unless it be burned; and only love can burn it out—Heavenly love, the Love of God. If we have that love shed abroad in our hearts, it will consume everything of the opposite character—jealousy, hatred, evil speaking, etc. Put off all these urges the Apostle, and put on Christ and be filled with His Spirit. Do not be discouraged. But learn the lesson and start again with fresh resolutions and increased appreciation of the fact that of yourself, without the Master's aid, you could never gain the prize. He knows this better than do we, and say's "Without Me, ye can do nothing." It was because of our need that the Father thus arranged for us. "Be of good courage!" is the Master's word to all who are longing and striving to be of the class called "conquerors."

YOUR ADVERSARY THE DEVIL.

Temptations seem to be specially permitted at this season of the year. "Roots of bitterness" seem to sprout and grow always, but *at this season with ten-fold vigor.* Let us remember that Love, not Knowledge, is the final test of our discipleship. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." It was because the Apostles had not enough love for one another that they disputed as to which should be the greatest in the Kingdom, and were so determined not to stoop to one another that they neglected also to wash the Master's feet, and gave Him the opportunity even in menial things to be servant of all. It was this wrong spirit—this lack of the Lord's Spirit—that made them susceptible to the Adversary's power, and led Judas to betray, and Peter to deny the Lord's Anointed.

Let us then take heed to ourselves, and watch and pray and be very humble and very loving, lest we fall into temptation. *Not since that time, probably, has our great Adversary been more alive than now to do injury, or to entrap or to stumble the followers of Jesus.*

Let all who hold fast the confidence of faith in His precious blood (His sacrificed life) as the Propitiation (*satisfaction*) for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world, be more zealous and fervent than ever before in confessing this great truth: "for even Christ *our Passover* (Sacrifice) is slain; therefore, let us keep the feast." None of the nominal first-born shall be passed over and become members of the Church First-born in glory, none except those who, during this night, abide under the blood, and partake of the merits of the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world—just as in the type.

WHO MAY PARTAKE?

The Lord's Supper is not for the world, not for merely nominal believers, but only for those who (1) accepting of Christ as their Redeemer and Sin-bearer, are (2) consecrated to Him and His service. But it is not for us—nor for any man or set of men—to *decide* who may and who may not partake. It is our duty to point out from the Word of the Lord what are the proper qualifications for participation in the "cup" and in the "loaf," and then to say as did the Apostle, Let every man *examine himself*, and then, if he think proper, let him partake.—1 Cor. 11:28.

Now that God's people are emerging from the errors of the Dark Ages, when this Memorial can be more clearly understood, the judging or examining of one's self can be more thorough than ever before. Let each ask himself:

(1) Do I believe the Scripture teaching that I, as a member of the human family, was under that condemnation to death which passed upon all because of original sin?

(2) Do I believe that my only hope of escape from that condemnation of sin and death was through the Ransom-Sacrifice of The Man Christ Jesus, my Lord?

(3) Do I believe He gave Himself—His flesh and blood, His humanity—as my Ransom-Price, pouring out His soul unto death, making His soul a Sin-Offering (Isa. 53:10, 12) on our behalf?

(4) Do I see that the consecration to death, made at Jordan when He was baptized, was fulfilled by His sacrifice of Himself for mankind, which, beginning there, was finished on the cross when He died?

(5) Do I see that the rights under the Law, which He secured by obedience to it (the right of lasting life and the dominion of earth) were what He through that same sacrifice bequeathed to the fallen, dying race—to as many as shall ultimately accept the blessings under the conditions of the New Covenant?

(6) Do I see that His flesh and blood, thus sacrificed, stood for, represented, those blessings and favors which *they* purchased?

(7) Do I see that the partaking of the bread and wine, symbols of His flesh and blood, signifies my acceptance of those favors and blessings which the flesh and blood of my Lord bought for me and for all?

(8) And if I do thus heartily accept the *Ransom* thus memorialized, do I consecrate my entire being—*my*—flesh and blood, justified through faith in that Ransom—to the Lord, to be broken with Him, to suffer with Him, to be dead with Him?

If we can answer these questions affirmatively, we clearly or fully discern the Lord's body, give credit to His Meritorious Sacrifice, and may eat—*should eat*—"Eat ye *all* of it."

HOW TO PARTAKE.

Meet with few or many, as circumstances will permit, but better far with a few who can enter with you into the spirit of the Memorial, than with a throng devoid of that spirit of fellowship and union in Christ.

Provide for the occasion, if possible, unleavened bread (or crackers) such as the Lord used, and such as Hebrews now use; because the pure, sweet, unleavened bread best symbolizes the sinless flesh of the Lamb of God, who knew no sin (of which leaven is a symbol), who was holy harmless, undefiled and separate from the race of sinners. Provide some drink from "the fruit of the vine," as the Lord directed.

The Memorial service should be very simple—it is chiefly a season of *communion*. Have a table in the midst of the assembly for the bread and wine. After the singing of a hymn, one of the brethren should, in a few chosen words, express the object of the service and read a few verses from the Scriptures on the subject. Another might then give thanks for the Bread of Life, the broken body of our Lord; after which the unleavened bread (or soda biscuit if more convenient) should be passed to all the communicants. An opportunity for remarks on the Bread of Life might here be given, or an extract from STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. 6, Study XI. Then a prayer of thanks for the "cup," and for the precious blood symbolized in it, should be offered, and the cup of "fruit of the vine" passed. Here an opportunity might be given for remarks on the precious blood. But avoid discussions at this meeting. However appropriate to contend earnestly for the faith on other occasions this is not such an occasion. This is a meeting for fellowship and communion with the Lord, our Redeemer and present King. If any seem contentious let him have his say, and let the others refrain from discussion, that the holy moments of special communion with Himself, which the Master appointed for our blessing, be not marred.

Those who celebrate the Memorial with guiless, earnest hearts receive a great and refreshing blessing, and for this it is well to have seasons of quiet in the midst of the service, when no one will be speaking audibly and when the hearts of all can come very close to the Master in communion—in realization of His love, past and present, in renewing the pledge made to be His faithful follower even unto death, in considering how that pledge has been kept or violated during the year preceding, and in resolving afresh to run with patience the race for the prize of joint-heirship with our Lord, to which we are invited.

A beautifully appropriate hymn for closing the Memorial is No. 276 in our hymn-book. And it will surely add to our joy to realize that some of like precious faith in all parts of the world are celebrating the same great Sacrifice, thinking of the same gracious Lord, being comforted and encouraged by the same exceeding great and precious promises, resolving by the grace of the same gracious King to do greater service and to make greater sacrifices in His service and in the Service of His people thenceforth, and closing with the same song of praise and worship.

"Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Thus before the cross we'll spend;
Life and health and peace possessing
From the sinner's risen Friend."

Of the first Supper it is written; "They sang a hymn and went out." Let us do the same. Let each go to his home with his heart full.

We suggest the ommission on this occasion of the usual, general and proper after-meeting greetings, and all commonplace remarks and thoughts. Thus we may prolong our communion and fellowship with the Master. *Keep within sight of Him throughout the next day. Hear the clamor of the people against the guileless One. See them incited by the clergy of Jerusalem. See Him before Herod and his soldiers. See Him arrayed in robes of mock-royalty and crowned with thorns then buffeted and spat upon.*

See Him crucified as a criminal, and taunted with the very gracious deeds which He had performed—"He saved others, Himself He cannot save." Remember that He could have saved Himself; that He could have asked for and would have received, "more than twelve legions of angels," to deliver and protect Him; that He could have destroyed His enemies and vilifiers, instead of dying for them; and that our hope of a resurrection and everlasting life depended upon His willing offering of Himself as our Ransom-Price. Considering His love for us and for all, it will surely strengthen us as His followers to endure more and more hardness as good soldiers of the cross; Aye, let us consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest we become weary and faint in our minds, under the light afflictions now permitted for our trial and discipline, which, if faithfully endured, will work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

The hour is late—the end is drawing nigh—
And as we gather here,
Brethren beloved, to share this holy feast.
We know the time is near,
When all His loved ones shall be gathered Home,
Our tears all wiped away,
And all the shadows that oppress us here
Shall yield to perfect day.
Then with rejoicing let us now partake,
Our journey's almost o'er;
The light is breaking o'er the Heavenly hills!
Our King is at the door!

Z. '13:67, 73.

What the Messenger to the Church of the Laodiceans wrote about

LOVE

THE GREATEST THING IN THE UNIVERSE [Part One]

"Covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet I show unto you a more excellent way."—I Cor. 12:31.

LOVE—VARYING IN KIND.

The question naturally and properly arises, What is Love? The Bible answers, *"God is Love,"* as it is impossible to fully describe God in all His greatness, so it seems impossible to fully describe all that would be comprehended in the word *Love*. Love is the most powerful thing in the world; therefore Love most nearly represents God, because He is the Supreme, Almighty One. We might say that God is not this, not that, not the other. And so with Love—we might describe it by saying what it is *not*. *Nothing can be right that is out of harmony with Love, as nothing can be right that is out of harmony with God.* The Apostle says, in describing Love, that it does not think evil, does not vaunt itself, has not the disposition to be puffed up, is not easily provoked, does not take pleasure in iniquity, etc.

We may, of course, remember that our word *love* is made to cover a variety of sentiments; for instance, the love of a hen for her chickens, her care over them; the love of a father and mother for their children, and their care over them. Love, then, includes this interest in all that are under one's care. God has this quality of sympathy which leads Him to look out for the whole universe—all sentient creatures, all that have life. He is bound by Love to look out for all these.

In human love—natural love—we find sympathy a very strong quality. Then we have a higher than mere sympathetic love—we have esteem, appreciation of some admirable quality. We say that we love certain traits in the character of some one. Again we have something more than mere sympathy and esteem; we have affectionate love. That is a very real and deep interest in every affair of the one we love—a deep, sympathetic love which would stop at nothing—even though it is an earthly love. The only thing that could be superior to it would be our love for the Almighty, which should dominate us as superior to this affectionate love.

Later comes in the spiritual love for the Lord's people which seeks to avoid all fleshly preferences, seeking merely to live as a New Creature, and to look after the welfare of the New Creature. Thus doing, we become closely united to the things of God and to all who are associated with us in the work of this Gospel Age. This is the highest type of love on any plane of being—this into which we have entered. God is Love. The more we grow up into this proper, spiritual Love, the more we are growing up into the character-likeness of our Father, of which we read, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."—Matt. 5:48.

This love does not stop with those who are appreciative of it, but also goes out to those who are unappreciative, knowing that something is hindering them from attaching any value to such love. Love, then, is so much of God's likeness, the thing to be most appreciated, the thing without which all else in life is useless. To be devoid of love is to be devoid of God-likeness. And so the Apostle goes on to enumerate the characteristics of this love—meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, godliness (God-likeness)—Love. All of these are merely parts or streams of Love flowing from the inexhaustible Fountain. These characteristics all proceed from Love, and are strong in proportion as our love is strong.

JUSTICE THE BASIS OF LOVE.

Next we inquire as to the way in which Love fulfills the Divine Law. Divine Law is not necessary as respects restraint from *good* deeds. There is no need of a law to say, "You shall not do too much for your brother, or give too much money." No law is necessary along these lines. But Divine Law steps in and says, "You shall not come *short* of a certain standard." So the Law calls merely for justice.

The Apostle Paul points out that since the Law calls for *justice,* we shall not murder our neighbor either by our act or by our tongue. We must be perfectly just in everything pertaining to our neighbor. *Every thought of our mind must be just, absolutely just.* This is the standard of the Divine Law. We are violators of the Law if we give *less* than justice to anybody. Therefore the Law as set forth to the Jews, told them what they should *not* do. "Thou shalt not bear false witness." "Thou shall not steal," etc.—Telling them merely the things that they should not do. Whoever *loves* his brother would not *wish* to steal from him either his property *or his good name.* Hence love fulfills everything that the law could demand.

Love has no limit in its capacity; as, for instance, God's sympathetic love was exercised toward mankind after He had pronounced the sentence of death. That death sentence must stand, yet

" 'Twas Love contrived the way
To save rebellious man;
And all the steps that Love display,
Which drew the wondrous plan."

Love has done this by providing for the satisfying of the Law in respect to Adam, so that Adam can be freed from the Law sentence. Justice could not lay this obligation upon the Logos; therefore God could not command. The only thing He could do was to set before Jesus certain incentives. God set before Him the joy of being the Savior of men, and the additional joy of high exaltation in God's Love and favor and to the glorious Kingdom privileges. So Love might use various inducements.

Love with us must also be *just.* We can never take what belongs to one and give it to another. The sympathy may be there, but Love cannot act in violation of Justice. Hence the advantage that Christians have who are students of God's Word. The Bible gives us the true conception of what Justice is. It gives us the balance of a sound mind. The Heavenly Father has sympathy and love, but He exercises these qualities according to the principles of Justice. We are not limited to justice. It was not *our* law that condemned our brother, but God's Law of Justice. So we are at liberty to exercise our love beyond mere justice.

EVIL SURMISING NOT OF LOVE.

Love, as we have seen, is that great and grand quality which more fully than any other quality represents our Heavenly Father. *Love includes a great many things—not merely generosity and affection.* It seems to include every good quality—things that can be appreciated outside of justice.

The Apostle's statement, "Love thinketh no evil," is not to be understood to signify that Love is blind to evil, or that those who have the spirit of love are blind to evil. On the contrary, Love is wounded every day by contact with evil influences, and Love cannot help knowing that it is an evil thing that is doing the wounding. Love is not, therefore, to be blind, and say that there is no evil thing—no such thing as sin, selfishness and meanness; all these various things exist. Love is in contention with all these unlovely things.

Love thinketh that there is evil, and our quotation from the Apostle does not contradict this. The imperfection in the translation may perhaps be charged with the apparent difficulty. "Love does not *surmise* evil," would seem to be the proper thought. What is it to surmise evil? We answer that we have various means for arriving at conclusions. We *see* some things. We gain knowledge in various ways, direct or indirect. And for Love to have *knowledge of evil* is not wrong. But to *surmise* evil—to *imagine* evil when we do not have the *knowledge*—is wrong. Love does not surmise evil.

If we saw some one do an evil deed or knew in some way that the evil deed were committed, and it came under our jurisdiction, Love would not hinder us from punishing the guilty persons. Suppose the matter is mere hearsay and the report not well founded; then Love would be prompt to say, "I do not *know* that this is so. I will need to have proof." Love would wish to think well of every circumstance, every condition. If we saw that murder was committed, we would not be justified in *surmising* who *did it.* We might think who were the most probable ones, in order to make an investigation. We would think of the persons who had less love, but we should not hastily decide who is the murderer, simply because he or she has an unsavory character, an unloving character. We are to give him the full benefit of the doubt. We are to make investigation.

It would seem that some of the most serious wrongs have been committed by surmising evil. Evil has been surmised against people without a shadow of proof. It is not for us to say that any are totally depraved. Very few are totally depraved. But whoever surmises evil, even a little, shows that he is lacking in the quality of Love. Whoever surmises evil *much* shows that he has a very small degree of Love. Evil surmising makes countless thousands mourn. *Surmising evil* of others has caused *more suffering* in the world than *all the battles that were ever fought!*

The Lord's people are being taught of God, and hence are learning more and more to control their thoughts and words and acts. Our thoughts are to be kind! Our thoughts are to be generous! Our thoughts are to be just! We are not to allow an evil suspicion to lodge in our minds against anybody. The common law of man decides that no judgment shall be passed against any one until the thing be proven against him. Those who have done the most evil and caused the most difficulty are those who have surmised evil against others. But it is better if we learn this as a precept from the Lord's Word, and happy are we if we see the degrading power of evil-speaking and evil-thinking and entirely refrain therefrom.

"LOVE YOUR ENEMIES."

The basis of this instruction—that we love our enemies—is evidently that our characters may be developed. Retaliation is a natural element of the mind, and particularly of the fallen mind—the fleshly mind. The more selfish we are, the more inclined we are to render evil for evil, slander for slander, blow for blow.

Our Lord taught the very reverse spirit. We are to love even our enemies, doing them good in return for their hatred, and ever sympathizing with their condition and desiring blessings upon them from the Lord, while they are feeling the very opposite toward us, as indicated by the persecutions they practice upon us. The Lord says that we are to do this in order that we may be the children of our Father who is in Heaven. We have been begotten of the Holy Spirit, and by practicing along these lines we become more and more like Him in character.—Z. '13:196, 197.

"When clouds hang heavy o'er thy way,
And darker grows the weary day,
And thou, oppressed by anxious care,
Art almost tempted to despair,
Still wait upon the Lord.

"Whate'er thy care, believe His word;
In joy or grief, trust in the Lord.
Good courage He will give to thee,
And strong, indeed, thy heart shall be,
By waiting on the Lord."

Z., '11, 10.

THE GREATEST THING IN THE UNIVERSE (Part Two)

Jesus said, "blessed are *your* eyes, for *they see;* and *your* ears, for *they hear.*" Then to these who could see and hear, Jesus gave certain special lessons applicable to them—and not only to them, but to a certain like company, or class, all the way down through the Age. He told them that because they manifested a responsiveness of heart they were pleasing to Him. He told them that in proportion as they would make progress in imitating Him, in that same proportion they would come into fellowship with the Father and become participants in His Love.

And when some took this step of consecration, Jesus told them, "The Father Himself loveth you." He loves you because you have taken a stand for righteousness; because when you saw these principles of righteousness you were willing to do in accordance therewith. And the Father loves you because you are seeking to walk in the *narrow way—the way which is difficult.* The other way is a *broad way,* leading now to death and destruction. But this *narrow way* that I am pointing out to you, My dear disciples, is the way to life. It will cost you a great deal to be My disciples. But the Father will love you, and I will love you, and We will manifest Ourselves to you. And although you will have trials and difficulties you will have the peace of God ruling in your hearts. Then the disciples said they would *leave all* to follow Him.

WHAT CONSTITUTES GOD'S LOVE.

The expression Word of God is sometimes used when speaking of the Bible, and sometimes when meaning a message of God. Our allegiance is due to the One from whom we have received every good and every perfect gift. There is an eminent fitness in the thought that the One who has given us *life* should have our attention to His Word, our obedience to it. Some are disposed to be self-willed; some disposed to *regard the words of man. Such do not pay sufficient attention to the Word of God.*

God's Word is the great Standard by which all of His people should regulate their lives. We might have some thought respecting the Divine Plan, or others might make suggestions to us respecting God's will. *But any suggestions, whether from ourselves or others, are all to be subject to investigation in the light of God's Word.* Of course, we are first to ascertain that the claim of the Bible to be the Word of God is supported by really good evidence; then we are also to notice whether various portions are interpolations, or additions, that we may have the Word of God as pure as possible. But having *found* the Word of God, we should *keep* it, in the sense of reverencing it and *obeying it.* We should strive to regulate our lives and all of our doing by that Word. Who so keepeth God's Word will as a result find that God's Love is perfected in Him.—1 John 2:5.

The question then arises, What is God's Love? and in what sense can it be perfected in us? The Apostle John evidently refers to that love which is most perfectly represented in God—that love which is pure, free from all selfishness, from all stain—God's Love, because it is the right principle, the very underlying principle of His character. And all those who are keeping God's Word must have the same kind of love that He has.

At first we had a duty love. We knew that God had done great things for us, for which we should be very thankful. There was a debt of obligation on us in that respect. Then, too, we loved God because He had indicated that He will give His favor to those who love Him. Therefore a measure of selfishness would be in our love for a time. But we believe it is possible for us to have this perfect love of God. If it were perfect works of the flesh that were required, we might doubt our ability to have perfection. But since it is a matter of the *heart,* it is possible for us to attain it; for we can be pure in heart. So as our hearts become more and more free (from the world) from selfishness and sin, more and more will this proper, high standard of Love be appreciated by us and perfected in us. Our minds will be influenced by this Love; and all of our conduct, our thoughts, will come under the same regulation.

To have, then, this Love of God perfected in us, would seem to indicate that we would have the very highest ideal—that we love as God loves. We love our neighbor—we realize that he has certain rights which we are glad to respect. We would rather help our neighbors forward than to do anything which might hinder their progress in any way. God is not an envious, jealous, hateful God, but the God of Love. God is the *true* God, and not the one who is set up in our creeds.

As we appreciate the Word of God, it gives us the necessary instruction and guidance. All sin is selfishness, and all selfishness is sin. As the child of God comes to see the character of God more clearly, as he is desirous of being taught of God, he will come under the influence of God's Spirit. And he will study the Word and get clearer insight into it. Thus we grow in the knowledge of God. It is a progressive matter. God wishes all of His intelligent creatures to be animated by the spirit of His word—Love.

LOVE BASED ON FAITH.

We see that the love above described would not be a love based on ignorance. On the contrary, it is a love based on a clear knowledge of God, on an undissembled faith, a faith fully appreciating what He has said. For instance, one might have a certain love for God, and by and by a clearer understanding of God's character might shake that kind of love. God's intention is that mankind shall understand His arrangements thoroughly; and if they then appreciate His character, they will have the undissembled faith, and a love that appreciates all the features of His Plan.

We all see that in our experiences God gives us instruction respecting Himself. As we come to know Him, and to love Him *because* we know Him, we are proportionately getting this faith in Him of the undissembled kind. It is a faith based on a knowledge of God's character and Plan. An angel may be said to have faith—a well rounded out faith. "The Father seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth." And God wishes that all of His intelligent creatures shall worship Him from this standpoint of undissembled faith—a faith that is genuine, a faith that is well rounded out, knitted together, a consistent faith. Therefore God wishes to have all men come to the knowledge of the Truth.—1 Tim. 2:4.

God's arrangement is that we first make use of what truth we have, and thus have more appreciation; then more knowledge, and then more appreciation. A *well rounded out* knowledge is not yet possessed by any except the Church, and we do not have *full* knowledge. But it is God's will that we shall all come to an *appreciation* of the truth. It is not to be merely a *knowledge,* but a full *entering into it* that we may the more appreciate it. "This is life eternal, that they might *know* Thee," that we should become personally and intimately acquainted with the Lord. In order to do this, *it is necessary that we apply our hearts to this Wisdom,* *that we grow in grace, grow in knowledge, that we may know His Love.*

This will also be the procedure in the next age. The object of Christ's Kingdom will be to bring mankind to a full, clear appreciation of God's character. Such as attain this and sympathetically enjoy God's character will appreciate the principles of Justice, Love and Mercy represented in Him. Only as one appreciates these qualities in his own heart can he appreciate them in God. Only those who appreciate them will have everlasting life. Even though such should enjoy the full thousand years, they still might not be of the class to whom God would give everlasting life.

THE END OF THE LAW IS LOVE.

It is not merely *faith* that is necessary—not even the well rounded out faith—there must be a *pure heart* also. We could not get the well rounded faith unless we had a pure heart. A pure heart would be a *fully consecrated* heart—the whole mind given up to the Lord's will. Such a condition is necessary before we can enter into and make progress in the Lord's way. God would not accept us at all unless we had love and purity of heart. And even more than this is necessary. We must maintain it with a good conscience. Our consciences must be able to say, "I have not only a good *wish* respecting the right, but I have good *endeavors*." We should not only be able to say, "I did right," but our consciences should be able to say, "I did the very best I was able to do." Anything short of this would not be pleasing to God .

So, then, the end, or intention, of the Divine Law is to develope in us this love—a love fully consecrated to the Lord, a love like His, *a love that will be in accord with a good conscience and an undissembled faith—a faith that is well founded on the teachings of God's Word, a faith that is anxious to know God's will, and that searches the Scriptures* and delights in God's Law, and that can say as the Psalmist has expressed it prophetically, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God!"

A man may discern the principle of *justice* and say, "There is the standard one must go by." Another sees *love*, and says, There is the best standard! Is not that grand? "I wish to conform to that fully!" A third recognizes that *perfection* is the standard of the Divine Law, and having consecrated himself unreservedly to do the will of God, says, "Thy Law, O God, is my delight." This one delights in God's Justice, he delights in God's Love. He sees more than merely, Thou Shalt, and Thou shalt not. He sees things from God's standpoint. He sees the principles of God's character which govern the universe. So all who will ever come to an appreciation of everlasting life must learn to view matters from the standpoint of LOVE. —Z. '13:213, 215.

ABIDING IN DIVINE LOVE, CONDITIONAL

"If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love."—John 15:10.

Since all mankind are alienated from their Creator through sin and its condemnation, the application of the text by any individual implies that previously he has come to a knowledge of God's grace in Christ, and has accepted his share of the same through faith and has thus had access to the love of God, as one of the sons of God, begotten by the Holy Spirit. This is an important matter overlooked by very many who think to keep themselves in divine love and under divine protecting care without first complying with the conditions of admission to membership in the Lord's family. There is but one doorway of entrance "into this grace wherein we stand and (as sons of God) rejoice in the hope of the coming glory," and that is the doorway of faith in and acceptance of the atonement, accomplished for us by our Redeemer at the cost of his own sacrifice at Calvary. Anyone attempting to climb into the family of God otherwise "the same is a thief and a robber"—a rejector of the only way and name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.—Rom. 5:1, 2; Acts 4:12.

But our text, like all of the holy Scriptures, is addressed to the Lord's people, who once were "children of wrath even as others," but have come into divine favor through the appointed way; and it calls our attention to something that is necessary to us beyond, after our full conversion or consecration to the Lord. It implies that getting into God's love is by no means the end of the Christian way, but merely the beginning of it: after we are in the way the Lord gives us commandments as his sons, and expects us to manifest the spirit of loyal sonship by obedience; full obedience so far as the heart or intention is concerned, and as complete obedience as possible so far as the control of the flesh is concerned. *Whoever neglects either to learn or to obey the commandments of the Lord, thereby manifests a lack of the true spirit of sonship,* and thus condemns himself as unworthy to be longer reckoned or treated as a son of God. Thus seen the commandments of the Lord to those who have consecrated themselves and enter his spirit-begotten family, are tests, proving them either worthy or unworthy of the divine favors and promises assured to the faithful overcomers.

The object of these tests is manifest from the time we come to understand the divine plan of the ages—to comprehend how the Lord is now making selection of a royal priesthood to be joint-heirs with Christ the great King, and to join in the work of succoring, ruling, blessing and uplifting the world of mankind in God's due time, the world's "day of judgment," the Millennial age. We can readily see that divine law is necessary, in heaven and in earth, in order that God's will may be done—that righteousness, truth and love shall prevail; and *IT IS MANIFEST THAT WHOEVER IS NOT SUFFICIENTLY IN SYMPATHY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS EXPRESSED IN THE LORD'S COMMANDMENTS, SO AS TO WILL AND TO STRIVE TO OBEY THEM, WOULD NOT BE A FIT PERSON TO BE USED OF THE LORD* in enforcing the divine laws during the Millennial age, and assisting mankind in discerning their righteousness and the blessing which will follow their observance.

WHAT ARE THESE COMMANDMENTS?

Properly, we inquire, What are these commandments, the keeping of which is attended with such momentous results, and the neglect of which would mean the loss of our Redeemer's love and favor,—and hence, the loss of all the blessings specially prepared for those who love him? We answer, that our Lord's statement of these commandments briefly comprehends them all in one word, Love. Dividing the matter, we find that it has two parts—love for God and love for our fellows. Without this quality or characteristic, of Love, being so developed in us as to be the controlling influence of our minds, we cannot hope to abide in the Lord's favor. True, he does not expect to gather ripe grapes from the new vineshoot when first it makes its appearance; rather, the great Husbandman (1 Cor. 3:9) waits for the gradual development of the fruit, if after the shoot has come forth he sees upon it the bud of promise, which quickly developes, manifesting itself as the flower of the grapes. Nevertheless, manifestations of a coming fruitage of love are expected of the Lord, quickly after our union with him; and any smallness of development of this fruitage would indicate a corresponding lack of love and appreciation on our part, and would mean correspondingly small love for the *truth* and its principles; hence, the Lord's love for us would be correspondingly less than if more rapid progress were made.

Love would, necessarily mean the according of justice; because the law or requirements of the Lord are based upon justice, "the foundation of his throne." We are to view the commandments of the Lord from this standpoint, therefore, and to see first that our love for God is just, must recognize that we owe him love, devotion, appreciation, because of what he has done and promises yet to do for us. Justice calls for our loving, reverential obedience to the Lord. It is the same with respect to our love for our fellowmen. Justice, as well as respect for our Heavenly Father's regulations, calls on us to do right to our neighbor,—to do toward him as we would have him do toward us. This is not more than absolute justice, and yet it is the very essence and spirit of the divine law of love. But while justice is the first feature of the commandment of love, it is not the end of its requirements; it requires that going beyond strict justice, our love shall prompt us to the exercise of mercy and forgiveness. And in thus exercising mercy, we are again but copying divine love; for our Heavenly Father not only deals with all his creatures according to justice but going beyond the lines of justice, in great compassion and mercy he provided in Christ Jesus a Redeemer for sinners. True, he did not provide this in violation of his justice; yet so far as we are concerned it is just the same as though, out of love and compassion, he had overridden justice in our assistance. Hence in our dealings with others, who like ourselves, are fallen and imperfect, we are to remember this feature and not only be just toward them but additionally to be merciful, generous, kind, even to the unthankful,—that thus we may be children of our Father in heaven.

The Lord through the Prophet expresses this thought of how the law of love is divisible and covers all the requirements of Christian character; he says, "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8). That these are very reasonable requirements will be conceded by all; that God could not require less from those whom he is educating for the future judging of the world, is evident; and, yet, all three of these qualities specified through the Prophet, are comprehended in the one word love. Love requires that we shall deal justly with our neighbors, with the brethren, with our families, with ourselves; that we shall seek to cultivate our appreciation of the rights of others,—their physical rights, their moral and intellectual rights, their liberties; and that, appreciating these, we shall in no sense of the word, seek to abridge or deny them.

To "love mercy" is to go even beyond loving justice, and signifies a delight in yielding personal rights and privileges in the interest of others, *where no principles are involved.* It implies readiness to forgive the faults of others—a disinclination to be too exacting in respect to others, as well as a desire to be very exacting in respect to our treatment of others. The humble walk with God is included, also, in the commandment of love; because, whoever loves his Creator and appreciates his provisions for his creatures, in natural and in spiritual things, will love and appreciate God in return. And having such a proper conception of the greatness of the Almigthy and of his own littleness and insufficiency, except by divine grace, he will be disposed indeed, to walk humbly with the Lord—not seeking paths of his own, but, *trustingly seeking to walk in the path which the Lord has marked out—in the footsteps of Jesus.*

The same Apostle John who recorded our Lord's words of our text, commented further upon this subject of the love of God and of Christ, saying, "This is the love of God (i. e., proves or demonstrates our love of God), that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous." (1 John 5:3). This gives us the suggestion that the Lord not only expects us to keep his commandments of love to him and to the brethren but that he expects also that in keeping these we should become so filled with an appreciation of the commandments and the principles that underlie them, that we would delight therein; not merely because they are God's commandments, but, additionally, because they are right, good, proper. This thought the Apostle expresses in the words, "And his commandments are not grevious." It is one thing to keep the divine commands or to seek to do so, all the while feeling more or less of restraint, lack of liberty, compulsion, duty, etc.; it is another thing to obey joyfully.

It is not improper to expect something of this spirit at the beginning of our experience as the Lord's people, seeking to keep his comamndments; but we should expect, also, that as we grow in grace and grow in knowledge and grow in love, all these feelings of constraint, duty, etc., would disappear; so that, instead, we should delight to do the Lord's will, delight to keep his commandments of love, delight to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with God,—and that there should be a total absence of the feeling that the Lord's commandments are grievous, burdensome, irksome. This is the higher Christian development, and can only be found where the individual has become truly "A copy of God's dear Son," where the Father's spirit has developed and brought forth the ripe fruits of the spirit in abundant measure—meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness, love.

Recurring to our text, we note that our Lord's words also imply the same thing—the necessity for obedience to the commandments of love, and to such a growth ultimately as would separate them from any feeling of bondage of grievousness. Our Lord's words, showing this, are in the latter part of the text—"*even as* I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love."

As we look back at the beautiful character of our Lord Jesus and see his love for righteousness, for truth, and *his willingness to be obedient to his Father's arrrangements—even unto death*—we can perceive readily that our dear Master had a love for the principles which lie back of the Father's commandments. He obeyed the Father, not through restraint, not through fear, but from a perfect love. Recognizing the Father's commandments, but as not being grievous, using the language put by the Prophet into his mouth, his sentiment was, "I delight to do thy will, O my God, thy law is in my heart." (Psalm 40:8). We are to understand the Lord, therefore to mean, that in order to abide in his love we must reach such a heart condition as this which he had;—a love for the Father's ways, for the principles of righteousness and Truth. We may abide in his love at first under other conditions, feeling through our love the restraints of his commandment of love, but as we grow in knowledge, we must grow in grace, and outgrow those sentiments, and grow up into the Lord's spirit and sentiment in this matter; so that *obedience to the Lord* *will be the delight of our hearts, and any failure to do his will would cause a pain,* a shadow, an earth-born cloud, to hide us from the Father's smile.

Seeing the depths of our Lord's requirements, many will be inclined to say, "Ah, yes, it is true that we must attain to such character-likeness of our Lord, but that transformation and renewing of the mind is not our part of the work but the Lord's; He must do this for us, else it will never be done." Partly right and partly wrong, we answer. It is true that when we consider ourselves, how weak and imperfect we are according to the old nature, according to the flesh, we have good cause for despairing and deciding that we never could accomplish such a great transformation from selfishness to love, in our own strength. It is true, also, that the Lord proposes to work in us—"both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13). But it is just as true that we have a burden of responsibility in respect to this matter of overcoming. *It is the Lord's part to provide the way, the truth, the life,—the means by which we may attain unto the condition to which he has called us; but it is our part to use the means and thus to attain the prize.*

The Lord has provided for our justification, our reconciliation to himself, our acceptance to sonship, our anointing with the holy spirit, our instructions with the word of his grace, the word of promise. He works in us, to will and to do, through these exceeding great and precious promises and the glorious prospects and rewards that attach to them; but the amount that he will work in us and the results that will be worked out through these promises, depend upon us. As it depended upon us whether or not we would come into the grace which he has provided for us, and as we could have kept ourselves out of the love of God by refusing or neglecting the offer of his mercy, and love, so we could neglect the word of his promise, neglect the various means of grace which he provides for our strengthening, establishing and upbuilding in the knowledge and grace of the truth. And thus neglecting his provisions we would proportionately fail to abide in his love—fail to obtain the promised favors. The Apostle intimates this, saying:

"KEEP YOURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD."—Jude 21.

What, then is the essence of what we have foregoing found to be the divine instruction upon this subject? It is this:

(1) Our hearts from the very beginning are to appreciate the imperfections of our own flesh and to look away to the Lord for the needed assistance to abide in his love.

(2) The exceeding great and precious promises must be studied, earnestly, that we may thus have them constitute in us "the power of God" for good—keeping us in the knowlege of the Lord and, through obedience, in his love.

(3) This knowledge will profit us only as we put it in practice and seek to regulate our minds, our thoughts, our words, and so far as possible all our actions of life, according to this standard which God through his Word, established before us as an ideal. We are to remember that if we had all knowledge, yet had not love, it would profit us nothing, but we are to remember, also, that in the divine arrangement it seems to be impossible that our knowledge should progress much in advance of our obedience to what we already know.

(4) We are to appreciate every evidence which we find, in ourselves or others, of such growth in obedience to the law of God,—the law of love with its connections of justice and mercy and reverence.

(5) We are not to expect the full results of joy in doing the Father's will in the beginning of our experiences, nor are we to feel discouraged if in the beginning the motive be, to a considerable extent, duty-love instead of a love for principles. We are to seek at the Lord's hand further blessing and further filling of his spirit of love. We are to seek to study and to appreciate the basic principles upon which the Lord governs the universe, and are to seek to bring our hearts into sympathetic accord with that law and principle and spirit of righteousness. *We are to remember that much of our lack of appreciation of the principles of righteousness is due to our ignorance;* and we are to expect that as we come to know the Lord and to understand his plan better, the eyes of our understanding will open the wider so that it will be possible for us not only "to comprehend with all saints," but *to APPRECIATE with all saints, the PRINCIPLES underlying and constituting the divine law of love.*

Thus we may daily and hourly keep ourselves in the Lord's love by obedience to, and a growing love for, *the principles of righteousness.* And we are to rejoice in every experience in life,—its trials, difficulties, sorrows, disappointments, etc., no less than in its pleasures, if by any or all of these means the Lord shall instruct us and give us clearer insight into our own deficiencies, and a still clearer insight into that perfect law of liberty and love which he has established, *and to which he requires our full and loyal heart-submision.*—Z. '02:171, 173.

Love is not blind, but looks abroad through other eyes,
And asks not, "Must I give"? but, "May I sacrifice"?
Love hides its grief, that other hearts and lips may sing,
And burdened walks, that other lives may buoyant wing.

BROTHER RUSSELL'S PROPOSITION

Let us, then, dear brethren, more and more cultivate love, remembering that whatever else may be our attainments, all will be in vain without this crowning grace. The Editor has a proposal to make to every reader of this journal, which he believes will prove very helpful to each one who shall co-operate. It is this: That during the remainder of this year (if we shall be spared so long in the flesh), each of us pray every morning that the Lord will bless us in the cultivation of love, in thought, in word, in deed, throughout the day; and that every evening, in reviewing the events of the day at the Throne of Heavenly Grace, we remember to report to the Lord respecting our measure of success or failure.

Then note the results of your watching and praying; keep on the lookout for all encouraging evidences of growth in this fruitage of the Holy Spirit. Z., '15, 118.

JESUS ANOINTED AT BETHANY

JOHN 12:1-11

"We love Him, because He first loved us."—I John 4:19.

It is the deep, loving, benevolent hearts, like that of Mary, which delight in costly sacrifices at times, which also are likely to be deeply sympathetic and helpful to the physically poor. And in our ministrations to others we are not to forget that money is not the only thing of which people are sorely in need—some need love and sympathy who do not need money. Our Lord was one of these; his own heart, full of love, found comparatively little companionship in the more or less sordid minds of even the noblest of the fallen race represented amongst his apostles. In Mary he seemed to find the depth of love and devotion which was to him an odor of sweet incense, of refreshment, of reinvigoration, a tonic; and Mary apparrently appreciated, more than did others, the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the Master's character; she not only delighted to sit at his feet to learn of him, but now delighted, at a great cost, to give him some manifestation of her devotion, her love.

She poured the perfume first upon our Lord's head (Mark 14:3), the usual custom, and then the remainder she poured upon his feet. But the Apostle John, in recording the matter, seems to have forgotten entirely the anointing of our Lord's head, so deeply was he impressed with the still more expressive devotion manifested in the anointing of the feet and the wiping of them with the hairs of her head. It is indeed a picture of love—a devotion well worthy of being told as a memorial.

ACTIONS LOUDER THAN WORDS.

Some one has said:

"She took 'woman's chief ornament' and devoted it to wiping the travel-stained feet of her Teacher; she devoted the best she had to even the least honorable service for him. It was the strongest possible expression of her love and devotion. She gave her choicest treasures in the most self-devoted manner. She was bashful and retiring, and could not speak her feelings, and therefore she expressed them in this manner."

We are not surprised to learn that the whole house was filled with the odor; and we doubt not that the odor remained for a long time; but far more precious than that was the sweet odor of Mary's heart-affections which the Lord accepted and will never forget, and the sweet odor of her devotion which has come down through the centuries to us, bringing blessing to all true hearts who have honored her service and desired to emulate her conduct.

"UNTO ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE."

It is not our privilege to come into personal contact with our dear Redeemer, but we have, nevertheless, many opportunities for doing that which to some extent will correspond to Mary's act—it is our privilege to anoint the Lord's "brethren" with the sweet perfume of love, sympathy, joy and peace, and the more costly this may be as respects our self-denials, the more precious it will be in the estimation of our Elder Brother, who declared that in proportion as we do or do not unto his brethren we do or do not unto him (Matt. 25:40, 45). Moreover, he represents these "brethren" in a figure as "members of his Body"; and from this standpoint we see that, while it is not our privilege to pour the perfume upon the Head of the Body—now highly exalted far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named, next to the Father—it is our privilege to pour the perfume upon the feet of Christ, the last living members of his Church of this Gospel Age.

We know not to what extent the closing years of this Gospel Age may correspond to the closing days of our Lord's ministry; we know not how similar may be the experiences of the "feet" of the Body of Christ to the experiences of the Head of the Body; we do know, however, that in any event it is our blessed privilege to comfort one another, to encourage one another to sustain one another, in the trials incident to our "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (Col. 1:24). And to whatever extent we would improve these opportunities as did Mary, we must first appreciate them as she did.

"LOVE BEGINS AT HOME."

Nothing in this suggestion is intended to imply any neglect of the members of our natural families "according to the flesh"; attentions to these are proper always, and are generally so understood, and should more and more be appreciated and used in proportion as the Lord's people receive freely and fully of his spirit of love—kindness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering. But we emphasize that which the Scriptures emphasize, namely, that our interest and efforts are not to be confined to those of fleshly tie, but, on the contrary, are to be "especially to the household of faith." (Gal. 6:10). *There will be other and future opportunities of doing good to mankind in general, but the opportunity for serving "THE BODY OF CHRIST" is limited to the present age.*

Apropos of this propriety of doing good to others—expressing our love by our conduct as well as by our words, to the members of our families as well as to the members of the Body of Christ—we quote the words of another:

"The sweetest perfume that the home circle ever knows arises from deeds of loving service which its members do for each other. The sweetest perfumes of our homes do not arise from elegant furniture, soft carpets, elegant pictures, or luxurious viands. Many a home, having all these, is pervaded by an atmosphere as tasteless and odorless as bouquets of waxen flowers."

Another has said:

"If my friends have alabaster boxes full of fragrant perfume of sympathy and affection laid away, which they intend to break over my body, I should rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours, and open them, that I might be refreshed and cheered with them while I need them. . . . . I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without a eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and smypathy . . . . Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward on the weary road."—Z. '08:108, 109.

In scrutinizing our thoughts from the viewpoint of *purity*, we should consider, first, the *nature* of the thoughts; and, second, their influence upon *others*. Not only should our thoughts be true and honorable and just and right, but they should be *pure*, and such as will not excite others to impurity. We should avoid anything that, while not impure in itself, might have the effect of arousing impurity in another.

The Apostle's thought seems to be that we should guard our thoughts at all times.—Z. '11:166.

Since tasting of the heavenly manna we have no appetite for other things. Z. '08, 40.

KERNELS

PURITY OF THOUGHT AN ESSENTIAL.

We are to love and cultivate that which is *pure* to such an extent that that which is impure will become painful to us, distressing, and we shall desire to drop it from memory. This will be accomplished only by continually thinking upon those things that are pure, and avoiding the giving of thought to the things that are impure. We are to recognize true loveliness and to esteem it. When we would think on the purest of things, we must of necessity lift our mental vision to as high a point as possible and, as nearly as we may be able, discern the loveliness of the perfect character of our God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and proportionately, the loveliness manifested in one and another of the followers of Jesus who walk closely in his footsteps. —Z. '11:167.

This temptation of the Adversary before the "brethren" today is deceiving many, and probably will yet deceive all except "the very elect." (Matt. 24:24). These very elect "brethren," are those who follow closely in the Master's footsteps, and who, instead of hearkening to the Adversary's suggestions, hearken to the Word of the Lord. These very elect "brethren" instead of leaning to their own understandings and to Satan's sophistries, have faith in the superior wisdom of Jehovah and his divine plan of the ages. Hence these are all "taught of God" and *know thereby that the work of the present age is the selection of the "brethren" of Christ,* and their testing, and finally their glorification with the Lord in the Kingdom, as the seed of Abraham, to bless the world; and that in the next age will come God's "due time" for the world's uplift, mental, moral and physical. Hence the very elect cannot be deceived by any of the specious arguments or sophistries of their wily foe.—E. 116.

Whoever therefore, is being led of the Lord's angels (messengers) to a place of safety ere the foretold destruction overtakes the present Order, as were Lot and his family before the destruction of Sodom, let him not look back or *otherwise manifest sympathy with that which is condemned of the Lord to overthrow and destruction.*—Z. '16:262.

We should remember that we do not own even a penny of what we possess, or a moment of our time. *All* belongs to the Lord and should be spent along the *lines of spiritual things,* except where there is real necessity along earthly lines. To be sure, the world will not esteem us so much as if we would do more along earthly lines but we have not received our commission from the world.—Z. '14:7.

How deceitful is the old heart! How specious are its false reasoning! How many have proven this to their sorrow! How many have been inveigled and had the new mind captivated by the old! How many have found them-

We find comparatively little left at our disposal for sacrifice, comparatively little to lay down for the brethren, and this little the world and the flesh and the devil are continually attempting to claim from us, and to divert from the sacrificing to which we have consecrated it.—F. 469.

The things we think about, the Apostle Paul says, should be honorable just, praiseworthy, beautiful. If a thing has none of these qualities the Lord's people should not think on it at all. A wonderful transformation of character is effected by thinking on those things which have wisdom and depth of instruction—those things which come from no one else but God.—Z. '11:165.

Is this TRUE, or it is FALSE? Is the first question to be asked in the consideration of any matter. Love for the Truth lies at the very foundation of a righteous life, and whoever sympathizes with falsehood or exaggeration is more or less defiling himself; but whoever cleanses his thoughts is to that extent purifying his entire character. With our poor and imperfect brains there is great danger of our being mislead; and hence the Word of God exhorts us earnestly that we should NOT TOUCH that which we realize is untrue.—Z. '11:165, 166.

With the Apostle, we note the fact that, so far as we are concerned, the sacrifice, the laying down of life, is to be done in the main for the brethren—in their service; the service for the world belongs chiefly to the age to come, the Millennium.—F. 468.

What sincere child of God has not realized in times of greatest need and weakness, the power of God on his behalf supplementing his weakness with strength from above? And when the task was accomplished to which the Lord had called him and for which he felt so incompetent of himself, has he not realized in the outcome the wonder-working power of God?—Z. '11:105.

There is a worldly side to every question, every business; and for us to conform ourselves to these arrangements and to co-operate with them, WOULD BE SIN ON OUR PART.—Z. '11:56.

We are to remember that the *supreme test* is *loyalty to the Lord.* This was the test upon our Lord Jesus; would he be loyal to the Father? And this is the test upon us. Will *we* be loyal to the Lord? Whoever is thus loyal is an "overcomer." He will strive to be faithful under all conditions, and will *trust* even where he cannot *trace* the Lord's providences.—Z. '11:22.

It was after we had endured something for the Lord's sake, and for the truth's sake, and rejoicing in our opened eyes, that the Lord found us in a particular sense and revealed himself to us in a still higher and more favorable blessing, and thus we became his disciples in the highest sense—his followers. Let us CONTINUE to follow him; let us CONTINUE to take whatever experiences come to us in the path of duty, and realize that IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO BE ON THE SIDE OF THE RIGHT AND THE TRUTH.—Z. '05:76, 77.

Many are being misled by evil spirits. They have introduced various false doctrines and CONTINUALLY seek to entrap the human will and, if possible, to gain control over it—through obsession. Curiosity is one of the main baits to the hook of spiritism.—Z. '11:61.

The Court represents, in *the present time,* the earthly condition of those who are approaching God, but have not yet made a full consecration of their lives to Him and His service.

When the step of consecration is taken, Jesus, acting as our great High Priest, imputes His merit to cover our deficiencies of the flesh, and forthwith presents us to the Father. Our consecration of the earthly nature is thus made acceptable, and in the Divine reckoning we are from that moment dead according to the flesh, but alive according to the spirit—begotten again, not with corruptible seed, but by the Spirit of God. All thus begotten are in the Holy in their relationship to God—that is to say, they are children of God, heirs of God. Thereafter they have the enlightenment of the Truth as represented by the Golden Lamp-stand with the seven burners; the spiritual food as represented in the Table of Shewbread, and the privileges of worship and prayer as represented in the Incense Altar.

This condition continues until the end of this Age, when a judgment, or testing, or distinction, will be made as between the most faithful, the Little Flock, the Royal Priesthood class, and the less faithful class of the Great Company—the latter thereafter being typed by the tribe of Levi.

In the new order of things, after the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom, this distinction between the Church proper, joint-heirs with Christ, and the larger company of antitypical Levites, will be perpetual, and the services of the two will be different.—Z. '14:79.

Many of the Lord's earnest ones have so long been used to "swallowing" whatever was offered them as spiritual nutriment that they had never learned how to feed themselves at the Father's table.—Z. '05:72.

A DIVISION AMONGST THE PEOPLE.

Peace and unity are greatly to be desired; yet these are not always possible, not always advantageous. If all were perfect, peace and unity would certainly be the only proper condition, but so long as there are imperfections, errors, etc., there must be differences. In harmony with this our Lord declared that his message would not bring peace but a sword under present conditions.—Z. '05:57.

There is no fellowship between light and darkness, there can be no peace nor truce between the two; in proportion as the one obtains control, the other is excluded.—Z. '05:57.

Another of our Lord's parables (Matt. 22:1-14) shows a still further testing of the sanctuary class—a testing and separation even among those who have heard and recognized the harvest message.—C. 197.

The end is here. The great crucial test is upon God's people. Let every one, then, who has hope of being of the Kingdom class know that he must suffer persecution; and in doing this remember the Apostle's words: "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him. If we deny him, he also will deny us." All things of the world, all of its hopes and prospects, we have left behind us. We have burned every bridge connecting us with things earthly and the hope of earthly blessings. *There is nothing to which we could turn back.* All things are before us; life everylasting, with a perfect, glorious organism; joint-heirship with Christ Jesus in his kingdom; the loving smile and approval of Jehovah. *There is no inducement to relax.* There is every inducement to firmly press on, enduring hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ—patiently and cheerfully bearing whatsoever experiences the Father permits us to have, having in mind that soon we shall see him face to face and be forever with our Lord and King. Be patient, dear brethren. Look up and lift up your heads! The evidence is conclusive that our deliverance draweth nigh.—Z. '18:126.

Testings will be permitted to come upon the people of God for the very purpose of sifting out all who are not truly His. Then let us STAND FAST, knowing that He is faithful.—Z. '14:217.

With those who are in the family of God. It is a primary requisite that they first submit themselves to God —give up their own wills. They are first to recognize that they are unholy, born in sin; that they have imperfect, fallen tendencies, which if pursued, would be injurious. Therefore they should seek to make the will of the Lord their will. They should give themselves fully up to His guidance; His will concerning them is only for their good. *The Lord teaches His followers that they are to reason for themselves.*—Z. '14:173.

Evidently there are many who have been serving or attempting to serve God, who have not been giving out "meat in due season," but who have been giving out truths in a very confused way. It is for us, then, to be on guard and seek carefully to follow the instruction of the Apostle, "Study to show thyself approved unto God." Do not mind so much what men may say or think, but seek the approval of God first.—Z. '14:232, 233.

We must oppose the error, and must uncover its very foundations in our efforts to "show forth the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light," nevertheless, let us all the more speak the Truth in love, without harshness, without personalities. Our dear brethren are deluded, deceived, not *intentionally* opposing the *Truth,* we believe.—Z. '13:220.

The Lord's message to us is that to *obey* is better than *sacrifice,* however active and busy we may be. He tells us plainly that no sacrifice we can offer will be acceptable to Him unless we are first obedient to His Word.—Z. '14:101.

The Apostle urges that we become established in the faith. This term refers to "the faith which was once delivered to the saints"—the one Faith. This is to hold AT ALL COSTS. Satan will attempt to divert our minds into other channels, to draw our attention to some new thing. (NEW LIGHT).—Z. '14:313.

We would starve spiritually if we went to any other than the Lord's table. We know not anywhere else to go. *We shall stay right at the Lord's table. He has been feeding us on the Message of Truth and Life, and we believe that He* will put on the table everything necessary for those who are hungering and thirsting for the Truth; and that the Truth on every subject necessary for us will be given as the Lord is pleased to reveal it; for He has promised, "they shall be filled."—Z. '14:332.

We are inclined to the belief that the greatest sin in the Church—amongst the consecrated believers—is the sin of dishonesty; the sin for which Divine disapproval is so excellently illustrated in the case of Ananias and Sapphira. This is an individual matter still as it was in the days of the Apostles.—Z. '14:138.

There are times when positiveness is absolutely necessary even though it cause a division amongst those who profess to serve the same God.—Z. '16:202.

INTERESTING LETTERS

Dear Brethren:

My heart is full to overflowing and I have so many things to report that I really do not know how to start. I will divide what I have to say.

First, there was no doubt in my mind that I was a Stand Fast Bible Student.

The "Corn Gems" arrived yesterday in due time after an impatient waiting time, for I had had a foretaste and desired a full feast of fat things from our dear Pastor's pen. I had a foregleam of what No. 3 was like, for Brother ——— had shown me his copy. It is certainly a wonder and can be used to good advantage to push the undecided Eaglets off the edge of the nest.

About the convention! The most glorious, soul-satisfying convention I ever attended.

Friday, the 28th, arrived after anxious waiting, and I was on the scene bright and early, to find only two or three of the great ——— class on hand. To offset this, however, the first my eyes lighted on was my dear Brother ——— and others from the ——— class—fifteen of them, following the dear "comforters" around. Then there was a big delegation from ———. It was indeed gratifying to see the love and zeal of these dear ones.

The convention opened with just these few from the ——— class on hand. I must admit, my heart sank, but I had come to the convention with the thought of "Thy will be done," and that the Lord knew His own and would make no mistake in the choice.

I had burned my own bridges behind me and had taken my stand two weeks prior, but had not yet expressed any preference for the S. F. B. S.

Three more came in during the forenoon service, and my hope began to revive. I remembered what Brother ——— had told me, that the first day there would be few, the second day more, and the third day would surely bring them, and praise His holy name, that is how it worked. I sat away in the back where I could mark them as they came in, and watch them. Some came rather haltingly and sat down, but you could see their ears prick up after a few words, and then they would gradually move to the very edge of the chair and would literally devour both speaker and message. The great Fisher of Men, our blessed Lord, had them safe in His net. At the finale over forty of the class were there.

Now, a word as to the fellowship of the convention. It was glorious! How the love of God constrained the dear conventioners! It was welling out of every heart. These poor, starved ones were once more being fattened, and they were all anxious to tell about it and also of their love for one another. They saw eye to eye, no dissentions anywhere.

When the first day drew to a close did they break up and go to their various homes? No, indeed! They just clung to each other until physical weakness and the lateness of the hour, 11:15 P. M., compelled them to part.

The second day they remained even later, and the final day, Sunday, was the most glorious of all. After the love feast was over and the wheat garnered, did they break up? No, they left the great Masonic Temple to regather at the rotunda, and finally, arm in arm, wended their way to the ———, where the out-of-town conventioners were staying, and finally, at 12:10 A. M., tore themselves apart.

Now, the most important of all, on Monday, as per the invitation of our dear Sister ———, I brought Brothers ——— and ——— to enjoy a bountiful repast, after which the dear ones in the Lord assembled themselves to form an ecclesia.

Some twenty participated, and we had word from others that could not come to swell the number to thirty, and I feel confident that those who still remain in the I. B. S. A. will soon be forced out and over to where they belong, and I look for a final number of at least fifty.

The concensus of opinion was that all fear, worry and anxiety had vanished, and joy and peace had come into every heart. All were agreed that since the convention, their acts were under a close scrutiny and they were all striving to live closer to the Lord than ever.

The elders and deacons were the unanimous choice of the class and none dissented.

We had a sort of an after convention, and did not part till midnight. Verily, we have the old days of our dear Pastor over again.

The dear friends in ——— have been praising the Lord for His goodness in bringing that convention to them, and they also desire to thank you all who had a hand in helping it along and to assure them it was a great blessing.

Please, dear brethren, send us some more "Corn Gems" No. 3, for I know when they will be handed the dear friends tonight at meeting that they will go "like hot-cakes."

Praying the Lord's blessing upon all the dear ones engaged in this glorious work, I am,

Your Brother in Christ,

Signed, F. W. K.—, Illinois.

Dear Brother in Christ:

Your card of March 4th at hand this morning, and allow me to assure you that I shall be glad to be of any service in any way I can to the dear saints of God anywhere at any time I can. I shall be glad to distribute the "Corn Gems" to the ones in this district. If you have some extra copies of Nos. 1 and 2, I should like very much to have a few copies. I saw these but they belonged to another, and I did not have opportunity to study them.

I wish further to say that at any time any of the traveling Stand Fast Bible Students are passing this way, our home is open to them and we will be very glad to entertain them while in ——.

Some of the friends in this section have been arrested for circulating the petition to secure the release of the seven Brothers at Atlanta. The Lord knoweth them that are His, and I am so thankful. As a class here we do not feel we could do any work of the kind and have written Pittsburg so, and this has cancelled our connection with the "Tower Office" and the Society. We are all of one mind regarding the present conditions existing in the Church, believing it to be the time of the dividing of the Bride from the Great Multitude, and believing ere long the Judas class likewise will be manifest and believing the stand of a Christian in keeping separate from the world will soon bring our glorification.

Assuring you again that if there is any service that I can render I will be so glad if you will let me know.

Yours in the service of our King,

Signed, D. J.—, Mo.

Dear Brethren in the Faith:

I have been receiving from you for some time the "Old Corn Gems." They didn't come too soon nor too late, just at the right time.

"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." When the class meets, sing this hymn for me. The Lord never forsakes His own, but sometimes He lets them get good and hungry before He gives the food.

Some call me "the old convention rat," for I seldom fail to attend if they are in my reach, and with the exception of the last one I have always left full of good things. I attended the convention at ———. I was belated and didn't get in until the third day, and to my sorrow, I found everything in confusion. I had felt that I was one of the family and that I was going *home*.

When I found that the convention was divided, which side did I take? I took neither side. I just went out and drove me down a stake, deep down, and put my Bible down by its side and put the Seventh Volume on top, then took hold of the stake to stand and wait to see the salvation of the Lord. I haven't waited in vain; it has come, and brought the "Old Corn Gems" with it, and my loneliness is gone. I am not alone. Others are standing fast with me.

I got a letter from Brother ————, and he tells me that you are going to have a convention some time in the first part of April. It set me afire and I want to go. Please write and tell me what time it will be. Now I don't know that I will be there, but I have submitted it into the Lord's hand and said, "Thy will be done." If I do get there, we will all sing, "The Lord is *our* Shepherd and *we* will not want." You can find me a peg to hang my hat on in case I should come.

Please write at once and send me some free literature to give out and send some "Ships," for I find a great many people at *sea*. When I come I will have the expenses of what is my part. Love to all.

Your Borther in the Faith,

Signed, N. B. W.—, Idaho.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER SEVEN

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SUGGESTIONS

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

Inasmuch as many of the dear friends in expressing their appreciation of "Old Corn Gems" are sending us donations to apply as a subscription price, we desire that all shall clearly understand that these "Gems" are free to all desiring them and while the blessing resulting from the services and activities of this Stand Fast movement which has already gone far beyond our fondest hopes and expectations have been made possible by the generous responses of loyal, loving hearts of true saints, we cannot give assurance that this will continue for any definite period of time since we believe that our work will ere long be suddenly stopped when the Elijah class "persisting in declaring the Truth to the last will probably suffer violence and pass into glory."

Therefore we cannot enter names on our lists as subscribers since this would measureably obligate us beyond our limitations.

We desire further to state that from the sweet and cheering letters continually coming to us we are assured that your combined efforts and labors of love have borne rich and precious fruit. And to all who are contributing of their means to the support of this movement either by sending their donations to the Portland office or in having their names reported to us as doners by the Comforters, to whom many have so generously contributed of their substance, we are sending letters of acknowledgment and appreciation of their desire to thus have a share in these precious services of the last hours of our earthly ministry. To any not receiving such acknowledgments in due time, we would kindly suggest they notify us, so that we may be sure they are not overlooked and that they may know that their offering has been received and credited to their account in the Lord's Comfort Fund.

CONVENTIONS.

Friends expecting to attend conventions will save themselves and the arrangement committees much trouble by communicating beforehand with the persons designated on the list below. The following information should be given: (1) Number in party. (2) Hotel accommodations, etc., desired and price expected to be paid. In case accommodations in the homes of the friends are desired, color and sex should also be stated. Arrangements are under way to hold the following conventions in the near future:

Victoria, B. C., April 18th to 21st, inclusive.

Address all communications to Geo. Sellars, Oaklands P. O., Victoria, B. C., Canada.

Tacoma, Washington, April 25th to 27th, inclusive.

Address all communications to Clarence R. Johnson, P. O. Box 1377, Tacoma, Washington.

Bellingham, Washington (tentative dates), May 9th to 11th, inclusive.

Address all communications to Leon K. Pattison, 1225 High Street, Bellingham, Washington. Definite announcements regarding this convention will be made later.

How Long?

The subject uppermost in the minds of Stand Fast Bible Students at this time is "When will the glorification of the last members of the Body of Christ take place?" In the words of Brother Russell we reply "We cannot be far from our change."

We remind you, dear brethren, that Brother Russell believed that "our change" would take place *soon after the* "door was shut," also that "our change" would come *before* the great trouble which "trouble" is even now upon the earth and is rapidly increasing in intensity. Quoting from Z. '14, 330, we read "Now the Lord is letting them (the four winds) loose gradually and He will let them loose more and more until the great anarchy comes which would entirely destroy our whole human race unless it was arrested. *In the meantime the Kingdom Class will have been glorified,* and our great King will have taken unto Himself His great Power, and with the Elect, the Body of Christ, the Church, He will bring in peace and blessing to mankind . . . and then will be the beginning of the blessings that are to come to all people through the Christ glorified—Jesus and His Joint-heirs in the Kingdom."

As we look at these things we realize that we have every reason to do all in our power to prepare ourselves for this glorious work (the work of the glorified Christ). We remember also what our dear Redeemer told us to do: "When ye see these things begin to come to pass (do we see them? We think so!) then lift up your heads and rejoice, knowing that your deliverance draweth nigh." Just *how* nigh, the Lord did not say; therefore, we may not attempt to say, but *we cannot be far from our change;* and we advise that all of the Lord's people live day by day just as though this was the last day on this side the veil, and that tonight or tomorrow would usher us into the glorious things beyond the Veil. What a blessed way to live!—every day in anticipation of seeing our Redeemer. What a blessed way to live! The things connected with this present time seem less and less important to us and the things of our future inheritance seem more and more dear to us.

Believing then, that we shall soon be called to go under the second Veil, the following thoughts from Bro. Russell's pen about the "Glories soon to be ours" will be of especial interest to the saints. Possibly when we go through the deep waters (Isa. 43:2-5) some of the beautiful thoughts therein contained will return and rob the waters of Marah of their bitterness.

Our little *all* is surely none too much to give to our God, to our Redeemer to the cause of righteousness. A mistake made by many well-meaning people is the keeping back of a part of their heart for themselves. If we give the Lord nine-tenths of our heart and our will and reserve one-tenth, in the furthest recesses, it will but weaken and blemish our character, our lives, our success in Divine service. We will find ourselves making paths for selfishness and sin, from the unconsecrated, farthest corners, all over the consecrated nine-tenths.—Z. '11, 139.

ALMOST HOME.

Do eager hands lie folded on thy breast,
And hath the Lord of Harvest bid thee *rest?*
Dost see the happy laborers go by,
Nor canst refrain a tear or longing sigh?
Be calm, poor heart, and sink into His will—
"We're almost home, dear child, lean harder still!"

"Come all ye saints to Pisgah's mountain,
Come view our Home beyond the tide:
Millennial Canaan is before us,
Soon we'll sing on the other side.
O there see the 'white Throne of glory,'
And crowns which the saints then shall gain;
And all who shall love Christ's appearing,
Shall be blessed by His glorious reign."

G. 592.

Published by the Stand Fast Bible Students, under the supervision of members of a committee of seven. F. McKercher, Chairman, Box 939, Portland, Oregon.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER SEVEN

"They did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover—and the manna ceased—neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit (OLD CORN) of the land of Canaan (during) that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL. Z. '18:51.

A Few Thoughts From the Pen of the Laodicean Messenger About

"THE GLORY TO FOLLOW"

THE FUTURE INHERITANCE OF THE NEW CREATION

"If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together."—Romans 8:17.

THE DIVINE PROMISE is that the Kingdom of God will be amongst men—"under the whole heavens." The Scriptures state that both our Lord and the New Jerusalem, or glorious Kingdom of Messiah, are to come down from heaven to earth; and they call our Lord, therefore, Immanuel (God with us). During that thousand years God will in this sense dwell with men, walk with men. We already have this to some extent in our experience as Christians. God is with men, and Christ and the Church are with men, more or less contradicting and putting to shame the things of darkness of the present time.

But with all these suggestions it is not necessary for us to suppose that the Kingdom will be earthly. On the contrary, the assurance of the Scriptures is that the Church must become spirit beings before they can inherit the Kingdom: "We shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," while those of this class who have been previously dead will have an instantaneous resurrection; and thus we shall be "forever with the Lord"—not forever with the Lord on the earth, but always in the spirit condition. The angels are always in the heavenly condition, whether they are in heaven with the Father or on earth, and we shall always be in the heavenly condition—the spirit condition.

Nothing in the Scriptures indicates that there will be a restriction upon the Church, that she should remain in one place more than another. The intimation seems to be that, after she shall have experienced her change, the Church will be for a short time absent from the earth and in the presence of the Heavenly Father. We read in the forty-fifth Psalm that the Bride is to be brought into the presence of the Great King, arrayed in glorious clothing of wrought gold—"in raiment of needlework." The members of the Body of Christ will all be on the spirit plane, whether they are afar off or near the earth. This is what our Lord meant when He said, "I go to prepare a place for you" in the Divine family. This particular place is one that has never been filled by any others.

The various orders of spirit beings created by the Father occupy each its own sphere. But there is no Church of Christ amongst these. The Church of Christ is invited to occupy a place *next* to the Lord, *next* to the Father, *higher than all the other planes of spirit beings.* At the first advent this place had not been prepared for the Church, although the Lord had it in mind. Our Lord ascended up on high to prepare this place. He did so by making an application of His merit to the Church class, by imputing His merit to them and permitting them to become participators with Him in His sufferings in the present time, that they might also become sharers with Him in the divine nature. Thus He prepared the way to enter into that highest of all spirit planes, the divine.

We are not sufficiently informed respecting the spirit condition to know just how it would be possible for the Lord and the Church to *remain* in the Father's presence and maintain the government of the earth. Perhaps this course is possible. Yet again, such would perhaps not be a wise arrangement. Perhaps it would be necessary for them to be absent from the immediate presence of the heavenly Father and to approximate the earth, just as with Satan and his angels, who are in *tartarus*—cast down, separate because of sin. But Satan is to be bound for a thousand years; and the position which he has occupied is to be vacated. The entire Church is to be "caught up in the air" to be with the Lord forever—not necessarily in *tartarus*, but "forever with the Lord," that where He may be there they may be also, in harmony with the Divine will, to execute the Divine purposes.

Our thought, then, is that The Christ will be very closely associated with our earth, just as Satan's kingdom has been; and that they will be equally invisible to men, who will not see them during the thousand years, just as men have not seen Satan and his fallen angels. But as Satan and his angels have been doing an evil work, so Christ and His Church will be doing a powerful work, a good work, a work on the spirit plane; and associated with them will be various agencies, one of which undoubtedly will be the "great company." The members of Christ are the ones that are mentioned as "kings and priests unto God," who shall reign on the earth.

THE EARTHLY PHASE—INTELLIGENT, WILLING MEN.

Then there will be earthly agents of this Kingdom, just as Satan has his agents, who are sometimes under his control through ignorance and superstition, sometimes from mesmeric power, all of which will be removed at that time. But the agents of Christ will be intelligent and willing. At that time the Ancient Worthies will be "Princes in all the earth." All mankind will gradually come into fellowship with the Kingdom and, proportionately, indirectly, become associated with the Kingdom itself. All mankind will be blessed in proportion as they approve and uphold the Divine arrangements.

Thus the Kingdom will be spreading for the thousand years, not only from one individual to another, but gradually bringing them back to full perfection. We read that "of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end." It will conquer everything before it. Nothing shall stop it. Every evil thing having been destroyed, every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth will be heard praising God. Every knee will bow and every tongue confess; and His Kingdom will be without an opponent "from the river unto the ends of the earth"—having accomplished its purpose.

The Kingdom will then cease, in the sense that Christ will deliver the authority over to the Father. (1 Cor. 15:24-28.) This does not mean that the Law of God will be disregarded, as it has been during the reign of sin and death. To meet the exigencies of the fallen condition of mankind, and to bring back as many as possible into harmony with the Divine arrangements, a special Kingdom will be established—the Messianic Kingdom—which will come in between the Divine government and mankind, because mankind in its weak condition will be unable to meet the requirements of the Divine Law. But when this Kingdom has restored mankind to perfection, it is the Divine purpose for Messiah to relinquish this subordinate Kingdom, which will merge into and become a part of the great Kingdom of Jehovah. *Justice* will then operate. There will be no place for mercy, and the Heavenly Father is not then represented as being a merciful King to His creatures. The Heavenly Father will then have made them perfect, so as to need no mercy, and they will be glad to meet all the requirements of the Divine Government, and will be blessed in so doing.

THE CHRIST TO BE ASSOCIATE RULER OF THE UNIVERSE.

Having terminated this work, our Lord will not be without an occupation; but, according to the Scriptures, He will continue to be at the right hand of the Majesty on High—next to the Father. He will relinquish the oversight of the affairs of earth, and will assume again the general position as Associate-Administrator of the affairs of the Universe in connection with the Heavenly Father. We are not to suppose, however, that the Heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus will be kept busy hearing and deciding cases and administering Justice, for the equilibrium will be such that there will be no necessity for such a course. The whole Universe will go on practically without any head; and yet there will be the Head. The Son will be next to the Father in authority; and next to the Son will be the bride. The work that will thenceforth progress is not revealed to us except in a very indefinite manner.

We understand by the power of telescopes that the suns have each a planetary system. If God made this earth a planet to be inhabited, it is only reasonable for us to infer that all the planets of the Universe will be inhabited, and that The Christ will behold the Heavenly Father and His wonderful Universe. The Power of the Heavenly Father is boundless, so far as we can understand. If after we have considered the hundred millions and more of suns and planetary systems beyond the power of human mind to contemplate—if then we realize that the Heavenly Father has made the position of Christ illimitable, and He has exalted the Bride of Christ with her Lord, then it is reasonable to assume that the work of Christ and the Church will be limitless, and that some blessed work for creatures not yet born is the work of all eternity. We simply wonder in amazement! *We wonder at the greatness of His goodness to us,* which is to lift us—the faithful few who make their calling and election sure—from our low condition to future glories INTERMINABLE! Z. '12:61, 62.

OUR LORD'S GLORY SHARED WITH CHURCH

Our Lord declares, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, *that they also might be sanctified through the truth.*" John 17:19. This seems to carry with it the thought, elsewhere suggested in this prayer, that our Lord had by this time come to a full realization of the Father's plan, namely, that his disciples were to be developed for the purpose of becoming his joint-heirs in the Kingdom, sharers in his glory. At first thought such a sharing of the great glory of the Kingdom might appear to be a lessening of the great glory of Jesus, just as the appointment of the seventy elders of Israel to be associates with Moses in judging Israel seemed at first to be a contraction or diminution of the dignity or authority of Moses.

But as Moses in the type was very meek, and gladly welcomed all the elders to joint-service, saying, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that *the Lord would put his Spirit upon them!*" (*Num.* 11:29), so the Lord Jesus, so far from feeling that the gathering out of the Church to be his joint-heirs in the Kingdom would diminish his glory, joined heartily in the divine plan, and declares here that he set himself apart, he separated himself from that feature of the glory and dignity of the Father's reward, that his followers might have a share in it, that they might become his joint-heirs, being set apart and brought to this honor through the Truth, through the great and precious promises bestowed upon them. This same thought seems to be presented in the words (vs. 22, 23)—"The glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one even as we are one: I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

The love of God pervades our hearts so that selfishness has no room there, and thus it was that our dear Redeemer, instead of feeling jealous that any others should be exalted to the divine nature, participators in the Kingdom, in this prayer to the Father declares his full acquiescence in the plan, his hearty co-operation, his joy to have it so. What a thought this gives to us as the prospective Bride, already espoused to the heavenly Bridegroom. He is pleased to exalt us from our lowly estate to be one with himself in his Kingdom, in his throne, in his Father's love.

Wonder of wonders! Where will the divine compassion cease! While we were yet sinners, under divine condemnation of death, we were loved and redeemed at a great price; and now, having been redeemed, we hear the voice celestial, saying, "Come up higher," yea, even to the throne, to joint-heirship with the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Could we keep ever before our minds this grand display of love and unselfishness how thoroughly it would scatter from the minds of all who are seeking to be copies of God's dear Son every thought of rivalry one with another. How it would cause us to rejoice in the growing usefulness and advancement in the Lord's service of every member of the body. How we should more and more feel what the Scriptures describe as "in honor preferring one another," and which rejoices in the prosperity of a brother, in his growing usefulness in the Church, in the growing evidences of his favor with God and man. Those who can thus rejoice in the prosperity of the fellow-members of the body have another evidence of their growth in the likeness of our great and glorious Head. Those who are without this sentiment should strive for it and be very discontented until it is attained.

Our Lord's prayer, "That they all may be one," has been fulfilled throughout the age. All who have been truly his have had a oneness of heart, a oneness of purpose, a oneness of spirit, with the Father and with the Son—a fellowship divine which cannot be produced by earthly creeds and fetters. So it is today, and so it is always between those who are truly the Lord's. They know each other not by outward pass-words or grips or signs, but by the touch of faith and love which it gives and which each recognizes. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, in that ye have love one for another."

"We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." True, we love all men and seek to serve all as we have opportunity, but, as the Apostle explains, "especially the household of faith," especially those who love the Lord and are trusting in the precious blood, and are fully consecrated to him, so far as they are able, doing his will and seeking to further know that will day by day.

WITH CHRIST, SHARING HIS GLORY.

Our Lord's words, John 17:24, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me go with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." This is not a petition, but a declaration of the Lords will, as though he were saying, Father, I understand that this is thy will in respect to these my followers, and I will it also, acquiescing in this great and liberal arrangement which thou hast made. I will be glad to have my followers ultimately on the same plane of glory with me, and that they may there be blessed by seeing and sharing the glories thou hast conferred upon me whom thou hast loved always even before the foundations of the world—even before the arrangements were made for these my disciples.

The closing words of the prayer are beautiful and give us an insight into the Lords confidence in the Father and fellowship with him. He knew the Father, and so he has declared respecting us that this is the highest evidence that could be granted us of our acceptance with the Father and of our participation in the life eternal which he has provided, namely, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent." Our Lord declares, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: But I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me." And I have made known unto them thy name, thy character, thy greatness, thy goodness, thy love, thy benefactions, and will make known still further as they are able to bear it, as they grow in knowledge of the Truth, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them.

How wonderful is this love of God and love of Christ! How impossible it seems for us to measure its lengths and breadths and heights and depths! Those who have accepted the Lord as their Redeemer and have entered into covenant relationship with him, giving him their little all and accepting from him a participation in all these blessings of his provision, if ever cast down because of weakness or opposition or what not, should call to mind this great love which the Father has for us and which the Son shares, the love which not only redeemed us while we were yet sinners, but which since then has called us to such wonderful blessings and privileges, making us joint-heirs with Christ our Lord, if so be we suffer with him;—this love will not be lightly turned away, this love would chasten us rather than premit us to fall away into the second death; this love will finally deliver, either in the little flock or in the great company, all who continue to trust in Jesus and *continue to hold the faithful Word.* But in proportion as this love of God dwells in us richly, in proportion as Christ is enthroned in our hearts, in that same proportion we will have a responsive love which will delight to do those things which are pleasing in our Father's sight and acceptable to our Lord, and in the same proportion we will be loth to do anything which would bring a cloud between the Lord and our souls. Let us, then, have fresh courage because of what we discern of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of love divine, and let this love of God constrain us to greater zeal and devotion to him and to his cause. Z. '05, 138-140.

LOVE "beareth all things," as enduring pressure on every side *without being crushed.* It "believeth all things," as being full of faith in the Divine promises and arrangements, *doubting nothing.* It "hopeth all things," in the sense that this perfect love toward God enables the heart to be *filled with confidence in the Almighty,* in whose love it reposes. It "endureth all things," in the sense that the soul which is united to God by the link of love *cannot be vanquished, cannot be overcome;* for this is the Divine will and arrangement. God will not suffer any of these little ones to be tempted above that which they are able to bear, but will with every temptation provide a way of escape.—1 Cor. 10:13. Z. '16:216, 217.

Faithfulness in trial will develop the over-comers. The Lord does not wish to have in the Little Flock any who are disloyal in any sense of the word. They may be weak in many of the essentials of character but they are *loyal to God.*—Z. '15:55.

THE FIRST RESURRECTION

"As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."—I Cor. 2:9.

"It is impossible for the tongue to describe this great honor and dignity." Rev. 20:6. *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the First Resurrection.*—"We shall be like Him (the glorified "changed" Jesus), for we shall see Him *as He is.*' He is a Spirit Being, 'the *express image of the Father's person,*' 'far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named,' and hence, far above perfect manhood. If we shall be like Him and share His glory and His nature, it means that we, too, shall be images of the Father's person, 'whom no *man* hath seen nor can see, dwelling in light which no *man* can approach unto;' but to whom we can approach and whom we can see as He is, because we have been 'changed.' (1 John 3:2; 1 Tim. 6:16; 1 Tim. 1:17; Exod. 33:20.) Lest any should misunderstand him, the Apostle guards the above language by adding, 'As *we* (the Church) have borne the image of the earthly (one), *we shall* also bear the image of the Heavenly (One).' It is not the Apostle's thought that all shall bear the image of the Heavenly One, in this sense, ever. Such was not the design of our Creator. When He made man, He designed to have a *fleshly, human earthly being,* in His own likeness (mentally, morally), to be the lord and ruler of the earth, as the representative of His Heavenly Creator." (Gen. 1:26-28; Psa. 8:4-7; F722.)

On such the Second Death hath no power.—Aside from the Father and the Son, these are the ONLY ONES in the Universe that will forever be beyond the possibilities of death.—Rev. 2:11; Rom. 2:7; 1 Tim. 6:16; G. 305-306.

Rev. 21:2. *And I, (John) saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem.*—"The New Jerusalem is not 'that great city (government) which ruleth over the kings of the earth' (Rev. 17:18), but is the new Spiritual Government of the Millennial Age. It is not reared by men, but descends from God out of Heaven. It is for this Kingdom, this Government, that our Lord taught His disciples to pray, 'Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in Heaven'."—Z. '16-392; Isa. 52:1; Matt. 5:35; Heb. 11:10; 16; 13:14; Rev. 3:12; 21:10; 11:2; 22:19.

Coming down (from God) out of Heaven, FROM GOD.—"We are not to think of this Holy City as being composed of literal stones, but of 'living stones' (1 Peter 2:4-7; Eph. 2:19-22). Neither Christ nor the saints in glory can be seen of men. But the whole world will quickly be made aware of the fact that a new Government has been instituted—a government of righteousness and all power."—Z. '16-392; Heb. 11:10; 12:22; Rev. 3:12; 21:10.

Prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.—"This declaration implies its beauty, grandeur and perfection, as a bride's adornment on such an occasion is particular and elaborate to the last degree. Additionally, the statement reminds us that in the government of the future the world's judges are to be the saints selected throughout the Gospel Age and frequently called 'the Bride, the Lamb's wife'."—Z. '16-392; 2 Cor. 11:2; John 3:29; Eph. 5:31, 32.

Rev. 21:3. *And (I heard) a great voice.*—The Lord Jesus, the Father's Word.

(Out of heaven) WAS saying, OUT OF THE THRONE, Behold the Tabernacle of God is with men.—"This verse associates this City with the other figure of a symbolic Temple, which the Lord is now preparing, of which the saints will constitute the 'pillars.' God will dwell in this Temple, and the world of mankind will approach God in it to receive the Divine blessings, as Israel approached the typical Tabernacle and the Temple in their typical religious services." (Z. '01-199.) "When we think of the Church as the Temple under construction, it impresses upon us the thought that there is a future work to be accomplished. Why construct a Temple, and then not use it? St. Paul says, the Church is God's workmanship. (Eph. 2:10.) And His work will be so perfectly accomplished that there will be no need of rectification or alteration beyond the veil—beautifully illustrated in the erection of Solomon's Temple, of which we read that its stones were prepared at the quarry and then finally assembled for the construction of the Temple, and that they were so perfectly shaped and marked for their various places, that they came together without the sound of a hammer." Z. '15-189; 2 Cor. 6:16; G. 316-317.

THE CROWN OF LIFE — WHO WILL RECEIVE IT?

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him."—James 1:12.

The above words of the Apostle James are a part of an earnest exhortation to all the Church of God scattered abroad. "Blessed is the man who endureth (with fortitude) temptation." Those who do not love the Lord with all their hearts, in whom self or some other idol has first place, will be seduced by the world, the flesh or the Devil into some form of rebellion against the Divine Word or Divine providences. They will have schemes, theories or desires which they will prefer to the Lord's Plan and way; and their own theories, plans and ways will be found, when analyzed, to be based upon selfishness and ambition or an evil spirit of envy, hatred, jealousy, pride, etc. It is only such as endure such temptations and besetments with fortitude, by the grace of God conquering and subduing the fleshly mind, that will receive the promised crown.

The Apostle here speaks of the final reward as being "the crown of life." It might be possible to view this matter of the crown of life from different standpoints; for instance, to think of life as being a crowning blessing, on whatever plane of being. Those who will be brought into the Lord's favor during the Millennial Age will, after the close of that Age, if proven worthy, gain everlasting life. In other words, they will be crowned with a life which will be endless. The Ancient Worthies will have this life everlasting. They will be crowned with life. Life, perfect, unending, is the greatest blessing God could bestow. Then the Little Flock will be especially crowned with life; for they will have life on the superior plane, the life of the Divine nature—the nature of Jehovah; life in the very highest form will be their crown. So we think of all these things as being crowns of life when all have been tested and proven to the end of their course.

THE CROWN ABOVE ALL OTHERS.

But we have reason to suppose that St. James is here referring to the Church, the Bride of Christ, the most blessed of all humanity. *The Church is now especially on trial.*

This trial of our love, endurance, faith, patience, is for the purpose of demonstrating which of us will be found worthy of the chiefest of all blessings—the Divine nature, which God has promised to those who love Him—love Him more than they love houses or lands or bonds, more than they love wife or husband or parents or children or self, or any other thing. God will have a reward for others, also; but it will not be this highest crown, which He offers to the Bride of His Son alone.

What constitutes the temptation spoken of in our text? The answer of the Scriptures is that the Lord has said there will come trials and temptations—disciplinings—to those who are His, to develop their character, to prove their steadfastness, (standfastness) and loyalty. Without trials and temptations our allegiance to God would never be shown. Self-love might be reigning in our hearts, and we would not recognize it unless it were demonstrated. It is very easy to think how much we love the Lord and how much we would like to do for Him. Then comes the temptation to sloth, and to do something for ourselves instead of for the Lord. It is easy for us to think we love His will, and to sing:

"I love Thy will, O God."

Then we are severely tried on that line, and we sometimes find out that our love for His will needs yet further development and greater fixity.

Our covenant with the Lord is to love Him with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. We are to live up to this standard in the spirit of our minds so far as we are able by Divine assistance, trusting to the merit of the precious blood to cover our unavoidable deficiencies. Yea, we are to "lay down our lives for the brethren." The temptation comes to love other things more, to love self more, than we love God and the brethren. The Lord permits these trials and temptations and difficulties to come to us. The way we meet these, we think, will have much to do in deciding whether we shall be worthy of the highest crown of life.

THE CROWN OF LIFE AFTER THE TRIAL.

"*When he is tried,* he shall receive the crown of life." The expression, "when he is tried," does not mean one tried merely; but our entire experience is spoken of as a trial, a test of loyalty. Our whole life is a matter of trial or testing to see how sincere we are, how fully we love the Lord, what we are willing to sacrifice, in harmony with our covenant. "When he is tried," then, means, when his trial is over. Then he will receive the "crown of life." He will not get it before. That would not necessarily mean, however, that he would get the crown the minute the trial was over—as soon as his sacrifice was completed in death. Jesus slept until the third day before He received His crown. The Apostles and others slept for many centuries before they received theirs.

It does not mean, either, that the very minute or the very day on which the Christian had fully demonstrated his faithfulness to the Lord he would immediately fall asleep or would be instantly ushered into honor and immortality by the glorious change of the First Resurrection. The Lord might have further purposes of usefulness, etc., in regard to His children before their sacrifice would be completed.

So with every phase of our trial and testing there should be a demonstration of our loyalty, (to the Lord and His Word). Let the trials come, then, and let them continue to come. No matter what our natural infirmities may be, we shall be granted grace sufficient; and we are expected to be loyal under all conditions, at all times, until the end. Z. '15, 150-151.

THE WISE CHOICE

"Choose ye this day whom ye will serve; as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."—Joshua 24:15.

The Children of Israel had crossed Jordan. Moses was dead and Joshua was their Leader. They were having no difficulty at that time; but Joshua thought that it was proper just then for them to make their decision—proper for them to decide whether or not they would be faithful to the Lord, or would allow themselves to be led away by the idolatry of the people who lived in Canaan. Joshua had called them together and had recounted to them the Lord's blessings and favor which they had thus far enjoyed, and then expressed himself in the grand and noble sentiments of our text.

So, dear friends, we who realize that the Lord has been blessing, guiding and sustaining us in the past, should come to a full, *positive decision* as respects our course of life. The very fact of coming to a positive decision is a great blessing and a great help in the formation of character. Every time we come to a wise decision on any question, it strengthens mind and character, and makes us much more ready for another test—along some other line, perhaps.

We well recognize the fact that the entire consecration which the Christian makes, leaves nothing out; but we need to have some touchstone, something which will enable the mind to reach a decision quickly, and this touchstone should be *God's will,* so that to perceive the Lord's will on any subject would be to settle it without any temporizing. Again, it is highly proper that we should reiterate our consecration, and thus make it prominent before others.

For instance, if this were New Year's Day, and we were at a testimony meeting, there would be nothing wrong in saying, "Whatever anyone else may do, I acknowledge God and will serve him!"—not as a new vow, but as a fresh acknowledgment of the consecration Vow we have already taken.

We are to recognize the difference between making a new covenant every day, and the daily renewing of our covenant; the one would be an impropriety; the other would be proper. If we have made a binding covenant for life, we should no more think of breaking it than would a man who had leased a house or sold it.

Every day we should renew our covenant with the Lord—renew it and make it fresh in our minds, thus showing that *there has been no change on our part; that we are still in the same attitude.*

> (*The Stand Fast Bible Students have not changed, but are standing Fast by the doctrines and Principles taught by the Laodicean Servant. Neither Broad Views nor New Light have succeeded in shaking them from their Covenant of sacrifice unto death.*)

This is the same thought as was in the making of our consecration; we are dead with Christ—"Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." We are exhorted to make this review of our lives and renewal of our consecration daily; to continue to keep this before our minds and hearts; to render our sacrifice to the Lord. Thus we are baptized by baptism into his death; and this baptism continues just as it was with our Lord. He had made his consecration and so it had to be completed; so it is with us; our vow, our covenant is unto death.

If the Lord's consecrated people could be brought to the point where the chief aim in life, the burden of all their prayers, would be that they might have a larger measure of the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of the Truth, the spirit of Christ, the spirit of a sound mind, what a blessing it would mean! The Lord reveals himself for the purpose of giving this blessing; but he withholds it until we learn to appreciate and desire it. Z. '11 78.

THE ONENESS OF THE DIVINE FAMILY

"I pray for them . . . which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them."—John 17:9, 10.

There is a touching pathos in this prayer of our Lord for his disciples as he was about to leave them, which draws us very near to his loving heart; especially when he adds, "Neither pray I for these alone (then present with him), but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one—I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them as thou hast loved me."—Verses 20-23.

As we come to consider this beautiful expression of the Lord's sentiments with reference to the Church, we catch a glimpse of the glory of the blessed oneness of the divine family. It is a oneness of purpose, a oneness of confidence, a oneness of sympathy, a oneness of love, a oneness of honor, and a oneness of mutual possession. This oneness our Lord described as already existing between himself and the Father, but so far as his disciples are concerned it was and still is only prospective; and its full accomplishment is the ideal goal toward which we are taught to aspire.

But let us study this exemplified oneness more closely that we may be enabled the more fully to enter into it. In the first place we notice that the one purpose which is common to both the Father and the Son is the Father's purpose, which was gradually revealed to the Son in due time and order, whose it also became by adoption. Since Jesus himself said, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only" (Mark 13:32), it is manifest that the revelation of that plan to him was a gradual one; and that he was led into the knowledge of its various features as they became due to be worked out through his instrumentality. Thus he was allowed to *grow* in knowledge; and thus, too, he was spared the sad spectacle of subsequent trouble which also lay along the pathway of the divine plan. Thus, while he joyfully worked out the grand plan of creation (John 1:3, Pro. 8:22-31), he probably knew nothing of God's purpose for the subsequent permission of evil and the necessity for the great work of redemption. Before he came to that test of faith in God his confidence in his almighty power, wisdom and love had been firmly established by the experiences of the past. For centuries he had seen his mighty works, marked his wondrous wisdom and experienced his tender love. Could he doubt him, then, when another feature of his plan made manifest the great work of redemption and restitution, and gave to him the privilege of undertaking this work also, for the joy that the Father set before him? No; doubtless he did not at first realize the depths of humiliation and sorrow through which he must pass; but, step by step, along the painful way of humiliation and suffering, his faith in the Father, founded upon his previous experimental knowledge, sustained him, as it is written—"By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many."—Isa. 53:11.

We next notice between the Father and the Son a beautiful oneness of confidence. The Son trusted the Father fully—at first, because it was easy and natural. Created in the likeness of God, trust in the Being who brought him into existence was spontaneous, and experience served but to develope and establish it. And the Father trusted the Son fully—first, because he recognized in him the inherent principles of righteousness and truth and filial loyalty which he himself had given him; and, as the course of time and experience developed and the more firmly established his Son in righteousness, his confidence in him became firmly established. And so strong was the Father's confidence in the subsequent fidelity of his beloved Son, that he did not hesitate to declare the results of his faithfulness thousands of years before he even began the work of redemption. He even declared all the special features of the work, by the mouth of his holy prophets at various intervals for four thousand years before he began the work. And still he declares that the work shall in due time be gloriously accomplished. How wonderful and how beautiful is this mutual confidence.

We further notice a oneness of sympathy between the Father and the Son. The Son glories in the Father's plan, saying, "I *delight* to do thy will, O my God." He delighted in it because he discovered therein the worthy features of his Father's glorious character; and though his faith may have been temporarily tested by the permission of evil, his knowledge of God's character and resources, and of the depth of his wisdom did not permit him to doubt, but held him still in loving trust in his infinite goodness and grace, and, therefore, in readiness to acquiesce fully in the measures proposed for the final triumph of righteousness and truth.

And the Father was likewise in loving sympathy with the Son, not permitting him to be tried above what he was able to bear; and not leaving him to bear any trial alone, but always granting him the light of his countenance and a joyful sense of admiring approval (John 11:42; Matt. 3:17), except when, for our sakes, he permitted him for a moment to feel that he was forsaken; when, in the anguish of his soul, he cried out at this unusual experience, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Now, mark the oneness of love manifested. In every act we have already noted we have seen it expressed. It was mutual love that delighted to manifest and express mutual confidence, that gloried in the same loving and benevolent purposes, that sympathized fully with each other's thoughts and feelings, and that delighted in the close and blessed relationship of Father and Son. The Father did not treat the Son as a servant and hide his purposes from him; but delighted to take him into his confidence in so far as his wisdom and prudence dictated—*i. e.*, as the truth became meat in due season to him. And, in turn, the Son did not serve the Father as a hireling, but as a son with a common interest. The Father declared, "This is my beloved Son;" and the Son said, "I *delight* to do thy will."

How blessed the fellowship! It was a fellowship of joy and a fellowship of suffering—of joy in a common anticipation of the future glory; and of suffering in mutual participation of the preliminary trials to secure that end. The Son suffered in his humiliation and his dying agony; and the Father suffered in giving his only begotten Son—an intensity of suffering which the loving, yearning hearts of devoted parents can best imagine and appreciate.

There was further a recognized oneness of possessions clearly expressed by our Lord, who declared, "All things that the Father hath are mine." (John 16:15). And the Apostle says, God hath appointed the Son to be the "heir of all things," and hath "set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."—Heb. 1:1, 2; Eph. 1:20, 21.

And, lastly, we notice a oneness of honor. In honor each seems to prefer the other. The Father says: Let all men honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. (John 5:23). God has made him the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, and exalted him to his own right hand, to the chief seat of power in his kingdom, giving him all power in heaven and in earth. —Heb. 1:2, 3; Matt. 28:18.

In the work of creation he has set him forth in great prominence and glory, saying, "Without him was not anything made that was made." In the work of redemption and restitution God has set him forth so prominently that his name is the theme on every tongue, almost to the eclipse of the Father's own glory, who of necessity is himself greater than the Son (1 Cor. 15:27), and to whom the glory pre-eminently belongs as the Son also declares, saying, "My Father is greater than I;" and again, "I can of mine own self do nothing;" the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."—John 5:30; 14:10, 28.

The Son's corresponding anxiety to glorify the Father is most marked in the instance when, realizing that he was approaching the dreadful hour of his dying agony he exclaimed: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name—even at this cost to me." (John 12:27, 28). Again we hear him say, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." (John 17:1). And when the great work of redemption and restitution is accomplished, we see him delivering up the Kingdom to God, the Father, and subjecting himself to his further direction, that Jehovah himself may be universally recognized as all in all. (1 Cor. 15:24, 28). And we, like him, may surely trust that his purposes for the ages to follow will but the further express and emphasize the same lines of his glorious character—his justice, his wisdom, his love and his power.

Glorious oneness! who could suggest an improvement to its wondrous beauty and completeness? But the wonder and joy increase when we learn that it is also *our* privilege to come into this same blessed oneness with God. What! we inquire—the very same oneness as above described? Yes; undoubtedly it is our privelege to enter into the very same relationship and privileges and blessings. To this end consider the exceeding great and precious promises and see that it is ours to have the same oneness with God—of purpose, of confidence, of sympathy, of love, of honor and of possession.

The same plan of God is presented to and adopted by us, and we also are invited to become co-workers with God in carrying it out (2 Cor. 6:1); and in so doing we are counted in with Christ Jesus as filling up the measure of the sufferings of the anointed body necessary to the accomplishment of that plan. Our heavenly Father also similarly manifests his confidence in us—in the loyalty of our hearts toward him and in the sincerity of our consecration to him—even though he recognizes our inherent weaknesses and our inability to carry out fully our own determinations. But, notwithstanding this, so great is his confidence in our sincerity and integrity of heart, that, *on our profession of faith and consecration, he fully accepts us as his sons and heirs, supplementing our weaknesses and shortcomings with the all-sufficient merit of our Redeemer,* in whom we humbly trust. And not only so, but as sons, honored and beloved, he makes known to us, also, his secret counsels, which others cannot know (Matt. 13:11), and invites us to confide in him as children, and to speak to him freely of all that concerns us, in full assurance of his loving interest, even in our smallest affairs (Psa. 103:13, 14). And then he commits a portion of his great work to us. He gives us certain talents, certain portions of his goods, and tells to invest them for him according to our best judgment as to the profitableness of the results, not dictating all the minutiae of the management as to hireling servants, but merely submitting to us the general principles which should govern us. Thus, for instance, he gives us his plan as to the work in hand, with such general directions as, not to cast our pearls before swine; to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves; to give meat *in due season;* to do good to all men as we have opportunity, but especially to the household of faith; and to observe the times and seasons, and the character of the work in each—seed-sowing in the Spring, and reaping in the harvest time; etc., etc. Thus with general directions he sends us forth not like machines, to do a monotonous treadmill service, but as intelligent beings, to use our brains as well as our hands and feet. So he counsels us to *"study"* to show ourselves workmen approved, and to *consider* and *think,* and not to be "as the horse, or as the mule, which have not understanding, whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle." (Psa. 32:9). Then, according to our zeal and faithfulness, not only in the use of our hands, but also of our brains, in the Lord's service his confidence in us increases and we are entrusted with more and more of his goods and given a corresponding sense of our heavenly Father's approval. And the mutual confidence and fellowship of purpose and work, draw our hearts closer and closer to the heart of the Eternal, and the joyful realization of sonship and mutual interest and confidence and sympathy fills our hearts.

We are also assured of the same love from our heavenly Father which he exercises toward our Lord Jesus. The statement seems almost startling; but yet, hearken to our Lord's prayer—"I pray for them . . . that they may be one, . . . that they may be made perfect in one . . . that the world may know that thou hast . . . loved them *as thou hast loved me.*" (John 17:20-23). In amazement we inquire, How can this be? Our Lord Jesus was always in perfect harmony with the Father; a Son who gloriously reflected his likeness; but it has not been so with us; we were sinners and had nothing in us worthy of love. Yes, but we have been washed and cleansed, and, however imperfect our earthen vessels may still be, our hearts are perfect in his sight who is able to read the heart. And, as he sees us with a perfect heart—a perfect purpose and intention—striving to overcome the weaknesses and disabilities of our imperfect flesh, and with painful, yet determined, effort to do his will, and humbly trusting in the provisions which he has made for our redemption from the fall, God recognizes in us that which is worthy of his love. And so our Lord Jesus gives us clearly to understand that the Father loves us even as he loved the Son.

And not only is this equality of the Father's love for us as for Christ Jesus thus declared, but it is also manifested; for we are called to be *joint-heirs* with his Son, and partakers of his glory; and even as all things are his, they are also said to be ours.—Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 3:21-23.

While such is the oneness between the heavenly Father and all his anointed sons, it is blessed also to mark the same oneness between Christ Jesus and his anointed brethren. The Lord Jesus does not selfishly grasp all the glory and seek to retain it for himself, but the rather with admiration he contemplates their acquired worthiness and says, They "are mine and I am glorified in them" (John 17:10); and he would have them all bound up together with himself in the Father's love. He would also have them with him, beholding and sharing the glory which the Father had given him from the foundation of the world—the glory of his mighty creative works, with all the other evidences of his Father's love.—John 17:22-24.

Thus all the divine family are bound together in one bond of love and fellowship and confidence and sympathy and harmony and common interest; and the honor and glory of one are the honor and glory of all. The Lord's prayer abounds with petitions for this oneness. Mark the expression (verse 21)—"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, are in me and I in thee" (thy spirit or disposition and purposes and aim being common to us all). Hence, he would have us adopt the same Father's spirit, aim and purpose, and devote all our powers with zeal and faithfulness to the accomplishment of the Father's will. Amen, so let it be.—Z. '03:77-79.

FEEDING ON THE WORDS OF GOD

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."—Matt. 4:4.

We read that these words were a part of our Lord's answer to Satan when the Adversary exhorted Him to command the stones to be turned into bread, in order to satisfy His hunger, after fasting forty days in the wilderness. The Lord knew, however, that it would be unlawful for Him thus to use the superhuman power which came to Him as a result of His consecration to the Father's service. That power was not to be used for His flesh. Hence our Lord refused to use His superhuman powers for the gratification of the flesh, even though He hungered. Then Satan suggested: How do you expect to live if you do not exercise your power to live? Our Lord's answer, as we see, was that man shall not live by bread, merely, but by every word, every promise that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Our hope of eternal life, therefore, rests upon that *obedience* to God which would entitle us to eternal life, according to His arrangement. If our Lord had gratified the flesh He might have satisfied His hunger, but He would have violated His covenant of obedience to God. Whoever would have enternal life must seek to be obedient to God, to all that God has commanded, all to which He has directed the individual. Of course, He might have one command for the angels, another for man, and a third for the Church. But since we find that we are not able to obey perfectly every command of God, we cannot hope for eternal life by perfect obedience to the letter of the Word of God. Even though God has accepted us as His children, we can hope for life only by having the *spirit* of obedience to His Word.

One of the lessons to be learned in the School of Christ is that a "man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth"—food and raiment, etc.—but that his life, in the fullest, highest, grandest sense, is dependent upon his *complete submission to the Divine will.* Careful attention to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, to *every* admonition, *every* encouragement, *every* promise, is necessary to the development of those whom God is now calling to eternal life as joint-heirs with His Son in the Kingdom. Let us, then, more and more, as the disciples of the Lord Jesus, keep in memory the words of the text, and act upon them.

LIVE BY EVERY WORD FROM THE MOUTH OF GOD.

But how is it possible for us to live by the words that proceed out of the mouth of God? What did Jesus mean? How can God's words give life?

He meant that all hope of attaining eternal life depends upon God—upon the Divine Plan and its promises. Looking into these promises, we can see distinctly that the Divine Plan, dating from before the foundation of the world, is that all of God's creatures, created in His likeness and abiding in faith, love and obedience in harmony with Him, shall have life everlasting. This is God's Word upon the subject, namely, that *obedience* is the condition of life everlasting. This is, undoubtedly, what our Lord had in mind in the words of our text. He may also have had the thought that He had come into the world upon a special mission, to do the Father's will, and that His understanding from the beginning was that His perfect obedience to the Divine Will would insure Him glory, honor and immortality with the Father, eventually; but that any disobdience would mean the forfeiture of Divine favor and would involve the sentence of disobedience—*death.*

Our Lord's prompt decision, therefore, was that to disobey the Father's will and thus to secure bread for the sustenance of His body, would be a great mistake; that food thus secured could sustain life for but a little while; that His better plan would be to trust in the Word of God, the Divine *promise,* that those who love and serve and obey Him shall ultimately come off conquerors and more, and have eternal life with God. And this, our Master's conclusion, is full of instruction for us who are His disciples, seeking to walk in His footsteps.

DISCIPLINE AN EVIDENCE OF SONSHIP.

One "word of God" which is very comforting to His children is His assurance of Parental care and discipline. "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?" (Heb. 12:7.) In this statement the word "chastening" should not be understood as meaning disapproval on the part of our Father, and sin on the part of the individual, but rather instruction. We are guided in the matter by remembering that although our Lord was a Son in whom there was no sin, yet He received, in the Father's providence, as a part of the "cup" poured for Him, various trials, disciplines. All of these experiences were very profitable, showing that the Father loved Him; that the Father had something which He was desirous that our Lord should do, that He would not have been qualified to perform without some of these educational instructions and experiences.

Some disciplines, some chastisements, come as a result of our own mistakes and the natural consequences flowing from those mistakes and the apologies and heartaches which may necessarily follow them. God could save us from these experiences and so seclude and shelter our lives that we would not have anything to tempt us. But such is not His proposition. He wishes us to have these experiences that we may be guided in the right way and learn of our own weaknesses.

If we did not come into contact with various testing experiences, we should not know where we are weak. Thus we learn where we can strengthen our characters and how we can be thoroughly developed as New Creatures. The Scriptures speak of our Lord Jesus as "enduring such contradiction of sinners against Himself." (Heb. 12:3.) Our trials, or disciplines, in meeting every opposition that can come to us, should bring more or less of correction in righteousness. Even if this would not mean outward stripes, we, in any event, would have our mental regrets as New Creatures, and thus we would get a form of correction, or discipline. Additionally, the Lord causes His children to come into peculiar trials as an example either to the brethren or to the world. In many of these, whatever the cause, we may understand them to be also corrections or instructions in righteousness.

TRIAL—DISCIPLINE—NECESSARY TO THE PERFECTING OF OUR CHARACTERS.

Character cannot be developed wholly without trial. It is like a plant. At first it is very tender; it needs an abundance of the sunshine of God's love, frequent watering with the showers of His grace, much cultivating with the applied knowledge of His character as a good foundation for faith and inspiration to obedience. Then, when thus far developed under these favorable conditions, it is ready for the pruning hand of discipline, and is also able to endure some hardness. Little by little, as strength of character is developed, the tests applied to it serve only to develop more strength, beauty and grace, until it is finally developed, perfected, fixed, established, through suffering.

This great work of developing and training character is necessarily a slow and tedious one, and not infrequently it is a painful process. But the Apostle plainly tells us that such things are necessary for the development of steadfast and enduring character. Consider how your own experience has verified this, you who have been for some time under the Lord's special care and leading. How much richer you are for all the lessons of experience, and for the patience and other spirit-fruits that experiences have developed in you!

Although, like the Apostle, you can say that "No chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (Heb. 12:11.) The lessons of experience and discipline have made you stronger. They have increased your faith and drawn you into closer communion and fellowship with the Lord. They have made you feel better acquainted with Him and enabled you to realize more and more His personal interest in you and His love and care for you. And this in turn has awakened a deeper sense of gratitude and an increasing zeal to manifest that gratitude to Him. This also deepens the sense of fellowship with God, and gives confidence to the hope of final and full acceptance with Him as a son and heir, made worthy through Christ.

OBEDIENCE THE TEST.

Another helpful "word of God" is found in 1 John 2:5: "Whoso keepeth His Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." Here we have a test by which to determine our development as a New Creature. Only those who have *received* the Word of God can *keep* it, can retain it and comply with its requirements. The text suggests that it is a difficult matter to keep the Word of God. On all sides we hear various reasons why we should retain, hold fast the world, the flesh, rather than that which the Lord's Word holds out to us. *There are many allurements to entice us from the "narrow way."* Hence, these who hold fast to the Word of God are "overcomers."

The Scriptures intimate that to live righteously and godly in this present time will cost us our very lives. "Whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12.) Under present conditions, faithfulness means *faithfulness even unto death.* The intimation is that unless we have the love of God, we will not undertake to be obedient to His Word; that otherwise we can neither retain the Word of God nor be in accord with it, serving it even unto death.

Our Lord Jesus illustrated the perfection of obedience to the Word of God when He said, "I come to do Thy will, O God!" Everything written in the Book; everything that was God's will, He was glad to do at any cost. Our Lord Jesus could not have reached this degree of submission to the Divine will unless He had had love for the Father. And so with us. *Unless we have love for God and the principles of righteousness, we cannot continue in this way.*

Consequently, only those who so love God that they would surrender life to do His will, are properly keeping His Word. We may say that this condition is reached when we first make consecration, for the heart has given up its will and surrendered itself fully to the Lord—"Not my will, but Thine, be done." All those who are complying with the conditions of self-sacrifice have reached the mark of perfect love. Of course, there is another sense of perfecting which we shall attain in the resurrection. But *only those who will keep God's Word by faithfulness even unto death will secure the prize and become partakers of the divine nature.*

The *test* is OBEDIENCE. In proportion as we keep the Lord's Word, in like proportion the love of God is perfected in us; for if we have received the mind of Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the effect will be to cause us both to will and to do His good pleasure to the extent of our ability. And this ability should be continually on the increase year by year. Although we may not hope to be perfected until we shall be *"changed"* and be granted our new resurrection bodies, nevertheless, we may keep so closely in touch with the Lord in the spirit of our minds that we may have continual fellowship with Him; and by confessing our faults daily and seeking his forgiveness we may continue to the end of our journey clean from sin, even though we must still acknowledge the infirmities of the flesh, that in our flesh dwelleth no perfection.

THE WORK OF RESURRECTION.

A further word from the mouth of God assures us that He knoweth our frame. He remembereth that we are *dust*—weak, imperfect, dying; and that it is not His purpose that we shall continue always to be in conflict with ourselves—perfect will against imperfect body; but that He has provided that, in the resurrection, we shall have new, perfect bodies, in full accord with our new minds.

He assures us that He is able and willing to do all this, and that He purposes to give to His *elect,* bodies of a much higher order than the human—that He will give us spirit bodies—and that of the *highest rank.* We shall have part in the First Resurrection, and will thenceforth be able to do the Father's will perfectly in every respect, as we now show ourselves desirous of doing His will so far as we are able. O gracious provisions! O wonderful words of compassion, inspiring us to wondrous hopes of eternal life and glory! It will be to such as thus overcome in spirit, in faith (1 John 5:4), that the Lord will give the final Word of His mouth—"Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord!"

"A little while; now He has come;
The hour draws on apace—
The blessed hour, the glorious morn,
When we shall see His face.
How light our trials then will seem!
How short our pilgrim way!
The life of earth, a fitful dream,
Dispelled by dawning day!"
—Z. '11, 387-389.

"When friends betray thy loving trust,
And thou art humbled in the dust,
When dearest joys from thee have fled,
And hope within thy heart lies dead,
Still wait upon the Lord.

"OUR SUFFICENCY IS OF CHRIST."

Where's the day I'll call dreary,
While his favor shines so bright?
Where's the time in which I'll weary
Of his loving words of light?

Where's the test of faith that's greater
Than the measure of his grace?
Where's the loss of goods more precious
Than what's given in its place?

Where's the stone on which I'll stumble
While I trust to him my hand?
Where's the fear to make me tremble
When his words the winds command?

Where's the cross that is too heavy
When his strength doth lend me aid?
Where's the crowned head I'd envy
Since he's having my crown made?

Where's the home that we could long for
Like his palace up above?
Where's a way more fit to get there
Than his *narrow* way of love?

—*B. H. Barton.*
Z. '07, 364.

KERNELS

As to how we may decide as to what is and what is not the Lord's way for us, we find that the rule which George Mueller tells us he followed is so nearly the one which we follow ourself that we take pleasure in quoting it—

"I seek in the beginning to get my heart in such a state that it has no will of its own in regard to a given matter. Nine-tenths of the difficulties are overcome when our hearts are ready to do the Lord's will, whatever it may be. Having done this, I do not leave the result to feeling or simple impression. If I do so, I make myself liable to a great delusion. I seek the will or spirit of God through, or in connection with, the Word of God. The Spirit and the Word must be combined. If I look to the Spirit alone, without the Word, I lay myself open to great delusions also. If the holy Spirit guides us at all, he will do it according to the Scriptures, and never contrary to them. Next, I take into account providential circumstances. These often plainly indicate God's will, in connection with his Word and his Spirit. I ask God in prayer to reveal his will to me aright. Thus by the prayer to God, the study of the Word, and reflection, I come to deliberate judgment according to the best of my knowledge and opportunity, and, if my mind is thus at peace, I proceed accordingly."—Z. '09 :267.

Are we wiser than God? Experience teaches that we cannot trust to our own judgments and are on safe ground only when following the voice of the Shepherd implicitly. —Z. '11, 123.

Uncontrovertibly, where the command of God and the command of men conflict, the Divine authority must be recognized as supreme.—Z. '09, 39.

How are the Lord's followers tempted as he was in this respect? We have no power to turn stones into bread. No! But having received the holy Spirit, it is within the range of our opportunities to use the same contrary to our consecration, to use it for our physical benefit—for instance, to make merchandise of the Gospel, to preach that which would be pleasing to the natural man (and thus avoid persecution and imprisonment). This would be selling our birthright for the mess of pottage.—Z. '06, 41, 42.

Those who would inherit the Kingdom of heaven as joint-heirs with Jesus must love and serve righteousness to such an extent that a blind and unrighteous world will misunderstand them and persecute them on this account. By enduring such persecution faithfully, calmly, rejoicingly, they attest to God that they possess characters which are copies of that of His son our Lord.—Z. '10, 56.

For years we have been teaching respecting the peculiar trials of this hour, and calling attention to the statement of the Word that "A thousand shall fall at our side." Have we profited by the knowledge, or does the fact that some are now falling cause us surprise? The question is for each one of us. It is time for drawing near to the Captain of our Salvation, and time for COMPLETE separation from everything that would not have his and our Father's hearty approval.—Z. '09, 59.

"And can we hope to gain, dear Lord, such wondrous bliss—
To dwell with Thee in light ineffable?
Oh, can we e'er attain such joy as this—
The life immortal, incorruptible?
Ah, yes! for Thou hast promised, and Thy word is sure,
And thus inspired we press along the way;
The path is lonely, but the end is sweet,
And openeth into realms of perfect day."
—Z. '15, 13.

It follows, then, that the taking off of the wedding garment would properly enough symbolize either of two acts:

(1) Repudiation of the sacrificial work of Christ; or

(2) Repudiation of our nuptial contract—to suffer with him; to be dead with him; to drink of his cup; to be baptized into his death; to go to him without the camp, bearing his reproach.—Z. '10, 13.

The love of Jacob for the birthright is held up for our emulation. Esau's carelessness is held up as a warning that *if any of us are careless of our birthright, we shall not only lose it, but lose the favor of God.*—Hebrews 12:15-17. Z. '13, 77.

No one can *sell* his birthright until he *has* a birthright. Hence the application of this in antitype is merely to the consecrated people of God.

Only those who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit have a birthright in the highest sense. And only these could sell it for the mess of pottage. The world may strive for its various prizes and pearls, and is measuarably justified in so doing, because it has nothing else.

But the spirit-begotten heirs of the Divine Promise became such by promising absolute loyalty to the Lord and to the principles of Justice and Mercy. These must self-sacrificingly continue to walk in the Master's footsteps; else they cannot share with Him the glorious outcome.—Z. '13, 77.

How deceitful is the old heart! How specious are its false reasoning! How many have proven this to their sorrow! How many have been inveigled and had the new mind captivated by the old! How many have found themselves brought into bondage by the deceitfulness of the old heart! One of the favorite arguments is that the New Creature is commanded, "So far as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." . . . . This does not permit of peace at any price. If the old heart, the old mind, the old will, can get the new one to make a *compromise* of truth or duty for the sake of peace, there will be no end to the demands it will make; and the result will be that the New Creature would soon, in the interest of peace, be *violating the very essence of his covenant* with the Lord, and be fully submitting himself to the old will, although it desires not to do so,—indeed striving against the old will but led captive by it through its deceitfulness, and its skillful misinterpretations of the Divine Word.—Vol. 6:601.

The Master urges us to commit all of our interests to God and to wholly resolve to be obedient to him, to the extent of our ability, and then to realize the Divine care which is over all creation to be *SPECIALLY over* us, because of having come into special relationship to him, in accordance with his promises. Such need have no *anxiety* with respect to their earthly affairs,, but may trust all their interests to their Heavenly Father. Our eternal life is worth more than the food and rainment of the present life. If wise we will seek the future life AT ANY COST, at any sacrifice of the present one.—Z. '10, 73.

Through the Apostle God declares, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when He (the glorified Jesus) shall be revealed (at His Second Advent, in power and great glory) we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. . . . .

"How satisfactory! How far beyond all that we could have asked or thought! 'Like Him,' What more could we ask? 'Like Him,' whom 'God hath highly exalted, far above angels, principalities and powers'! We stand amazed at such grace! Moreover, we can realize that he who called us to become 'partakers of the divine nature' and joint-heirs with the Redeemer in his Mediatorial Kingdom has provided for our every comfort and joy in that heavenly state, the details of which we may not now grasp. Prophetically of these it is written, 'I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness.' "—Psa. 17:15. Z. '10, 281.

It is not sufficient, from the Divine standpoint, that we learn something about love, and have the feeling of love thrilling our hearts, and that generous emotions shall occasionally be ours; what the Lord seeks is "a peculiar people," "a royal priesthood," thoroughly established, firmly fixed in love for righteousness—so that all unrighteousness, all sin, all injustice, would be an abomination to them. Not only will they not love iniquity, but, as the scriptures declare, they will hate iniquity. And whoever truly loves righteousness must in the same proportion hate iniquity. But this is only the result of *fixed* character, and time and experience and many lessons from the Word of God and from the book of experience are necessary before character becomes so settled, so crystalized, that it is fixed and unwavering in its loyalty to righteousness. It is for this reason that the Lord has hedged up the way of his people during this Gospel Age, and made the way of life, the way to the Kingdom, a *"narrow"* one, full of difficulties, full of trials, which thereby become tests, and sift out those who do not develop the character which the Lord approves.—Z. '10, 261.

Injustice sometimes becomes intrenched and fortified in human minds so that an attempt to establish righteousness is considered treason, rebellion, outrage.—Z. '11, 74.

The delusions of the end of this age will not be such as would deceive the very Elect; but we should remember the other side also, namely, that such as would have the special watch-care and deliverance promised must *"abide under the shadow of the Almighty."* Of such, only, it is written, "A thousand shall fall at thy side—ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee."—Z. '07, 339.

Eli would have been more pleasing to the Lord had he had more firmness of charatcer—a clearer appreciation of his duty toward the Lord as His servant, and toward his children as their father. We may be sure that strong characters are more pleasing to everybody. They may in some respects be more difficult to deal with; but, nevertheless, firmness of character is something that is a jewel, highly esteemed by all wise men and women, as well as by the Lord.—Z. '15, 25.

Some may even have attained to all the glorious privileges of consecration, service, knowledge, etc., and then become cold, careless, overcharged with the cares of this life, and thus bring forth less fruit and not be counted worthy of membership in the Bride Class.—Z. '11, 343.

Let us lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race set before us in the Gospel, looking unto Jesus the author, until He shall have become the finisher, of our faith.—Heb. 12:1.

"No looking back on Sodom's plains
No listening still to Babel's strains;
No tears for Egypt's song and smile,
No thirsting for its flowing Nile.

'Tis but a little and we come
To our reward, our crown, our home!
Another year, or more, *or Less,*
And we have crossed the wilderness;
Finished the toil, the rest begun,
The battle fought, the triumph WON!"
——Z. '12, 68.

It requires a great deal of grace to be dead to the world and alive to God.—Z. '11, 391.

King Saul had been very diligent in his opposition to witch-craft and idolatry throughout the land of Israel, and in so doing was accomplishing a good work in accord with the Divine plan, the Divine will; but the Prophet calls attention to the fact that his energy in such matters would not prove an offset to his deliberate, wilful neglect of the Divine injunction. *The Lord's commands against sin and every evil thing are to be executed to the very letter,* no matter how highly exalted the sin may be in dignity and place, and no matetr how precious or valuable or desirable or toothsome the sin may be to our fallen natures. Though it be as dear as a right hand or as a right eye, *there is no course open to the Lord's followers but to be obedient—obedient even unto death.*—Z. '15, 78.

There are storms of life which sometimes sweep over ourselves and the brethren and over the whole household and imperil us, and which seem sure to sink us in despair. Then is the time for us to exercise faith in Him who said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Then is the time to remember the Master's words, "My grace is sufficient for you; My strength is made perfect in your weakness." Whoever can by the exercise of his faith take hold upon the Lord will find a great peace, a great calm come into his heart and into all of his affairs. Then he can remember the Master's promise that "all things shall work together for good to those who love God, and who have been called according to His Purpose."—Rom 8:28. Z. '12, 216.

"Up, then, and linger not, thou saint of God,
Fling from thy shoulders each impeding load;
Be brave and wise, shake off earth's soil and sin,
That with the Bridegroom thou mayest enter in.
O watch and pray!

"Gird on thy armor; face each weaponed foe;
Deal with the sword of heaven the deadly blow;
Forward, still forward, till the prize Divine
Rewards thy zeal, and victory is thine;
Win thou the crown!"

Z. '10, 245

ARE WE STANDING LOYALLY, FIRMLY FOR THE TRUTH.—Z. '09, 11. *Who will stand (fast) and who will fall.* According to the Scriptures and according to Israel, as a type, the MANY will fall to the FEW who will remain standing. To save ourselves, we must take prompt, energetic action. Our turning from the wrong ways must be positive.—Z. '09, 11.

We deprecate everything akin to sensationalism and everything calculated to the spread of fear amongst the Lord's people. Our attitude, based upon our faith, should be that of confidence, serenity, knowing that the powers of evil, whatever they may accomplish with others, cannot harm the "elect," who abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Therefore let us put away fears as marks or evidences of lack of faith, lack of trust in him who has declared that "all things shall work together for good to those who love God, to those called according to his purpose."

But while deprecating fear we should not close our eyes to what we see going on about us. The courage we want and which the Lord will appreciate is not the courage which closes its eyes and refuses to see, but that which trusts the Lord in the presence of apparent danger.—Z. '11, 4.

But those who have been spirit-begotten, and who then live according to the flesh, are not to expect any reward—not even Restitution. There can be nothing for them but the Second Death. They have had their chance for life and have abused it.—Z. '15, 149.

Let us, dear readers, make every effort that by the grace of God we may be amongst these very elect ones. Let us prize the Truth above riches or honor of men—yea, above life itself; so shall we be true disciples, followers of Him who is the truth, and who prayed for us saying, "Sanctify them through thy Truth, Try Word is Truth."—Z. '05, 142.

God is still at the helm, and is still working all things according to the counsel of his own will. It is for us to come close to the Lord and to wait for the development of his plan with absolute confidence and fearlessness.—Z. '09, 300.

We do, however, promulgate the message, "Behold the Bridegroom (present)" with the confident expectation that ALL who are of the "Virgin" class (the pure, the justified and consecrated), will be permitted to hear the message, will be aroused by it, and will trim their lamps (examine the Scriptures, investigate the subject), and find the message true, BEFORE the "door is shut" and the great trouble begun. We well know, however, from the Lord's prophetic parable, that among those who will be aroused to investigation, there will be *two classes,* because there are both wise and foolish "Virgins."—Z. '02, 91.

Study to avoid error and to shun all foolish questions and profane and vain babblings. Remember that only the foundation of God standeth sure, and that all other foundations are worthless.—Z. '02, 319.

As a matter of fact, we find ourselves today in the midst of these perilous and disintegrating influences. The storm is rising, and, as predicted, it is felt first by the Lord's little flock of consecrated believers. The faith and patience and zeal and endurance are being tried by every means that the adversary can devise. Every device of error is being put forth in its most pleasing and subtle form; and advantage is being taken of every weakness of the flesh to overcome those who are endeavoring to fight the good fight of faith and to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil.—Z. '02, 234.

Let all who are the Lord's people, and who have tasted of the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, see to it that they STAND FAST in that liberty, and as soon as an attempt is made to restrain it, if not sooner, let them get out completely from all the bondages of human systems, that they may stand firmly and loyally with the Lord, our Redeemer, our Instructor, our King.—Z. '02, 170.

The voice of conscience must be obeyed; it is at our peril that it is violated—no matter how erroneous and superstitious may be its standards. Let conscience be educated. . . . . Every violation of conscience is so much of character destruction.—Z. '02, 170.

Divine Truth is never found except in the divinely appointed channels; and those channels are the Lord and the Apostles and Prophets. To continue in the doctrine set forth in their inspired writings, to study and mediate upon them, to trust implicitly in them, and faithfully to conform our characters to them, is what is implied in continuing in the Word of the Lord.—Z. '03, 61.

INTERESTING LETTERS

Dear Brethren in Christ:

I desire to express my appreciation and thankfulness to our dear Heavenly Father and to you, dear brethren, for the great helps "Old Corn Gems," issue No. 2 of which was just received today. I have been much encouraged to press along the Narrow Way, trusting fully in the Lord, fearing not what man may do unto me. (Heb. 13:5, 6. Prov. 3:5, 6.) I am so thankful for these "Corn Gems." I think they are just grand and have been greatly blest through them.

Although I cannot actively engage in the glorious work which you are doing. I assure you of my sincere prayers that you may faithfully perform the Lord's work.

I am thankful that by the Lord's grace I have been able to stand, though I know that I have made many mistakes, but praise the Lord, He will overrule every experience for our good, that we may be made stronger for future trials. The first issue of "Corn Gems" came just at the time that I needed them most, being in great perplexity as to just what course to take, what the Lord's will was, etc. But since reading and meditating on the thoughts contained in Corn Gems, I am now fully decided and determined as to the Lord's will. I prayed earnestly to the dear Heavenly Father for guidance that I might do that which would be pleasing to Him.

I am at present in detention, rejoicing in the many privileges I am enjoying for meditation, study and prayer. I am in a cell with one other; it is very quiet and I am allowed all my books. I was sentenced to another twenty-eight days' detention at Wadsworth for my refusal to go on parade or do work of any kind in connection with the M., being offered many jobs around the camp. Naturally my present course, now that the war is over, appears foolish and narrow-minded to my friends, but praise the Lord we must expect to be misunderstood.

By Divine Providence I was kept here to do my sentence and yesterday I was told that they do not want me at Wadsworth, saying that they could not deal with me there any more. What will be done with me when my time is up I do not know, but will not be surprised if I am put on a draft and sent home. If so I will rejoice to meet you and to fellowship with the dear friends who are standing fast, but the Lord's will be done. He knows best. My earnest desire is to please my God.

I will eagerly look forward to the printed sermons at Stand Fast conventions and also future "Corn Gems."

Well, dear ones, I will close. God bless you in your work is my prayer. I remain,

Your brother in bonds by His grace and favor,

(Signed) H. H., England.

Dear Brethren:

Greeting in the name of our present Lord and King!

We wish to voice our appreciation of your work and labor of love at "Standfast" headquarters.

"Old Corn Gems" are *greatly relished* and we realize that the dear Lord is supplying all our needs in this famine time.

The letters of gratitude and appreciation from the dear brethren who have recovered from having been temporarily "gassed" by the Adversary's broad-view-ism, etc., rejoice our hearts.

This thought occurs to us: The demons said to Jesus: "Art thou come hither to torment (judge) us before the time?" (Matt. 8:29.) Now if the mind is the battle ground and the demon test is on—they being judged by the saints—it would be natural for them to say, "Don't judge, don't judge," "love, love, love," "fellowship, fellowship, fellowship," etc., and be provoked and angry if you do not do it their way rather than the Lord's way.

We cannot assume to be more loving and kind than our Lord and should surely draw the line where He draws it, whether it strikes demons, sentimental love or anything else out of harmony with God's law.

"To my Lord I must be true,
Who bought me with His blood."

Praying God's richest blessings upon you, dear brethren, we are by His grace,

Your "Standfast" brother and sister,

(Signed) J. W. T. and E. T.

P. S.—We are being greatly blessed by the dear Pilgrim-Comforters, Brother ——— having just visited us for the second time.

Dear Brethren in Christ:

Greetings in the name of our Lord and King. May Grace and Truth be multiplied unto you abundantly through the exceeding goodness of our Heavenly Father. I am writing to ask you to send me forthwith all copies of "Old Corn Gems" from the first, and future numbers also.

I am so thankful to my Father for the guidance and leading by which I was enabled to see clearly that the Standfast Bible Students were fully in harmony with the principles of Christian living as laid down by our Lord Jesus Christ and His Faithful Apostles and also by our beloved Brother Russell.

After being privileged to be eleven months in detention and prisons, etc., under the military authorities, for conscience' sake (but now discharged), how could I repudiate that stand as a conscientious objector, by staying with the Society which has gone back on its former stand fast principles? How thankful we should be for the liberty wherein we stand. Our hearts are filled with joy and expectation of an early union with our beloved Bridegroom. What a magnificent prospect is before us. O praise the Lord for it!

With Christian love and prayers on your behalf, I am,

Yours in the Master's service,

J. H. B., Canada.

Dear Brother:

Greetings in our dear Lord.

Just a line to tell you of the wonderful goodness of our Father toward us. I believe and have good reason to do so, that the ——— Ecclesia is the happiest class in the world. When we learned that there was a possibility of some of the dear Comforters coming our way we most earnestly asked the dear Lord to make it possible for them to be with us. Likewise we learned that Brother Wisdom and Brother Heard were coming for one day while on their way back to the West. We hastened to welcome them to our town and in our letter told them that our class was standing firmly to a man and were withdrawn from the Society. To our surprise a telegram came, saying, "We are coming six strong," and thanks to our dear Lord they did come.

Now I am sure you agree with me that our hearts are filled with gratitude that in closing up their Eastern tour they should have finished at our place.

We were seeing eye to eye with them before they came, but what comfort, peace and joy it gave us to have them come, confirming our hopes and stand.

Will you send me regularly ten copies of "Old Corn Gems"? I wish to distribute them among our friends here.

We earnestly pray God may add His blessing to your work, and that ere long we may all be gathered home to abide with our dear Father and Lord throughout eternity.

With Christian love,

Sr. D. J., Mo.

Dear Brother:

Just a few lines to inform you that from now on I want to be a "Stand Fast Bible Student."

Since July of last year I could not be in harmony with all that was brought to us by the W. T., but have left it with the Lord, knowing His promise that the very elect should not be deceived, and so waiting and watching I beheld the means used to obtain the release of the brethren at Atlanta. That has opened my eyes completely and so by the Lord's grace I have taken my stand and last night for the first time met with the other dear ones in ———.

I was just reading in the "Old Corn Gems" for March 1 a letter from ———, Wis. It seems to just fit my case. I am ever so glad that we awoke just in time to meet the Bridegroom. I am sending notice to the class of my stand and will wait patiently on the Lord for what He has to tell me further. I should be very glad if you would send me all the "Old Corn Gems." I would use all my free time to regain what I have lost. I thank my Heavenly Father for His goodness and mercy in opening my understanding more than ever before. I have a peace and joy in my heart above all description.

May the Lord richly bless you and keep you, is the prayer of your sister in the same hope,

J. S., Ill.

STAND FAST PRINCIPLES

The Great Master warned that, straight is the gate and narrow the way that leads unto life and that few would ever find it; and experience shows that fewer are disposed to walk therein after they do find it, for it is too narrow—it is the way of self-denial and SELF-SACRIFICE. It is the way our Lord walked in loneliness; and we are called to walk in His footsteps. No one can "STAND FAST" without so doing.

PRINCIPLE is defined as a "fixed rule of action." "STAND FAST BIBLE STUDENTS" therefore are "firm, unmovable, knowing that their toil is not unfruitful in the Lord." These prayerfully and conscientiously observe the Principles laid down by our Lord and confirmed by His Apostles. Their teachings form the "rule of action" of their daily lives. From these they steadfastly refuse to turn, come what may, ever bearing in mind that ONE is their Master and Him they would obey, whatever the cost. They know no other Master and use only the Liberty that comes from Him, their Head. Observance of such Principles of necessity leads to carefulness of conduct and to examination of motives, which are the mainspring of actions.

Therefore the teachings of the Lord and His Apostles, the CHANNEL of all Divine Truth, become their inspiration, their comfort and the source of their strength and consolation. Likewise all those of the "NARROW WAY" are careful to note and follow the precepts and practices of "THAT FAITHFUL SERVANT." Upon these they place consistent construction, and from the same they will not deflect; though others waver, they will not, they Stand Fast, but never use their liberty for a cloak.

Knowing their God, "Stand Fast Bible Students" consequently honor their Head by hearty obedience to His commandments. They would lift the "Royal Banner" high, that the poor world, through their lives, their courage and their loyalty, MIGHT SEE their Lord and Saviour.

The Principles for which these are so resolutely standing, are those set forth in the Scriptures, and so fearlessly, vigorously and uniformly advocated by "That Faithful Servant," and until the summer of 1918 were held to by all the adherents of the I. B. S. A.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER EIGHT

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SUGGESTIONS

NOTICE.

Three of our Pilgrim Comforters, Brothers R. O. Hadley, A. A. Yerex and W. B. Palmer, are planning a tour of the Central, Eastern and Southern states, for the comfort and encouragement of the saints throughout these parts.

NOBLEST SUBJECT FOR MEDITATION.

Whoever has time for meditation, will receive a great blessing if his thoughts shall turn toward the Almighty, acknowledging His goodness, seeking to give praise to God for all His manifold mercies, meditating upon God in the night watches.—Z. '15, 312.

NECESSITY FOR GUARDING THE HEART.

"Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life," exhorts the Wise Man. The thought embodied in this exhortation is of the utmost importance. Truly these are words of wisdom! As the heart is perhaps the most important organ of the human body, so the word "heart" is here used in a figurative way to represent the center of the affections of the human mind. The implication is that the heart needs keeping. There are many things to distract, to draw away, to lead astray. Not only the burden of business, but also *the trend of the world in general* and of our fallen flesh, tend to lead the heart away from righteousness, from the service of God, from purity, love and kindliness toward others.—Z. '15, 246.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

By his voluntary action, Brother W. M. Wisdom has disassociated himself from the Stand Fast Bible Students, and no longer represents us in any line of service whatever.

COMMITTEE OF SEVEN.

We need to scrutinize all that we receive, lest we ever be taken again by the delusions and hallucinations of the Adversary.—Z. '07, 92.

Shall we hold fast to the Word of the Lord, nothing wavering, nothing doubting? In order to do so we must discriminate clearly between the words of man and the Word of God, so that we may reject the words of man.—Z' '07, 57.

We must be on guard even in respect to doctrines which acknowledge the precious blood. And a clear discernment of the Divine Plan is necessary to this end, and this implies the searching of the Scriptures daily. It is not sufficient that we have used the Divinely provided helps. We are to remember that our memories are treacherous and that if we are not imbibing the Word in some form we are apt to lose valuable connecting links, leaving us open to some of our great Adversary's covert attacks.—Z. '09, 171.

"WHO SHALL STAND?"

Let us remember that we are in a testing season. The Apostles had a similar one during the interim between our Lord's death and Pentecost. So also there is one now. If there is any reason that would lead any to let go of the Lord and His Truth and to cease sacrificing for the Lord's Cause, then it is not merely the love of God in the heart which has prompted interest in the Lord, but something else; probably a hoping that the time was short; the consecration was only for a certain time. If so, now is a good time to let go. We would starve spiritually if we went to any other than the Lord's table. We know not anywhere else to go. *We shall stay right at the Lord's table.* He has been feeding us on the Message of Truth and Life, and we believe that He will put on the table everything necessary for those who are hungering and thirsting for the Truth; and that the Truth on every subject necessary for us will be given as the Lord is pleased to reveal it; for He has promised, "they shall be filled."—Z. '14, 331, 332.

In fact, we may suppose that the real testing, so far as the Church is concerned, is the making manifest whether we love the world—the things of the present time—or whether we love God *supremely*. As time goes on, it will be even more impossible to harmonize the spirit of love and the spirit of selfishness. *Those who love God will be fully out of harmony with the spirit of the present evil world.*

"Love not the world!
He in whose heart the love.
Of vanity has found a place, shuts out
The enduring world above.

"Love not the world!
However fair it seem;
Who loveth this vain world—the love of God
Abideth not in him."

—Z. '12, 371.

Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand,
Never foe can follow, never traitor stand;
Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry toucheth spirit there.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest.
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.

"Through many a thorny path He leads
My tired feet;
Through many a path of tears I go,
But it is sweet
To know that He is close to me—
My God, my Guide;
He leadeth me, and so I walk
Quite satisfied."

—Z. '15, 298.

Published by the Stand Fast Bible Students, under the supervision of members of a committee of seven. F. McKercher, Chairman, Box 939, Portland, Oregon.

Partial List of Classes and Number of Stand Fast Bible Students reported to date as having partaken of the Memorial Other Classes not yet reported will be considered later.

Portland, Oregon	210
Vancouver, B. C., Can.	182
Victoria, B. C., Can. (Five in prison)	153
Seattle, Wash.	120
Bellingham, Wash.	108
Tacoma, Wash.	61
The Dalles, Ore.	48
Chicago, Ill.	36
Spokane, Wash.	30
Los Angeles, Cal.	23
Oakland, Cal.	23
Milwaukie, Wis.	20
Lynden, Wash.	19
Kansas City, Mo.	16
Longley, B. C., Can.	13
Blaine, Wash.	11
Riverside, Cal.	10
Neosho, Mo.	9
Zion City, Ill.	9
Calgary Alta., Can.	7
Duncan, B. C., Can.	5
Agassig, B. C., Can.	4

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER EIGHT

"They did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover—and the manna ceased—neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit (OLD CORN) of the land of Canaan (during) that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL. Z. '18:51.

What Brother Russell Said About

STANDING FAST AT THE MARK

THE MARK OF CRYSTALLIZATION OF CHARACTER

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 3:13, 14.

In the Epistle to the Philippians, St. Paul expresses his full appreciation of his opportunity to gain a prize, something worthy of laying hold upon, of grasping fully, of getting possession of. What was that for which the great Apostle was striving and which he had not yet attained? He spoke of this thing as a *prize,* which he was pressing along to win.

We may view "the mark for the prize of the high calling" from two standpoints, both of which are correct. From one standpoint, this mark is that of *heart-likeness* to God's dear Son, of perfection of intention, of love for righteousness, for God, for the brethren of Christ, and for the world, even our enemies. This degree of character-development should be attained as early as possible in our Christian experience, and should be such that, were we to die at any time after its attainment, God would count us worthy of a share in the First Resurrection.

From the other standpoint, this "mark for the prize of the high calling" is that of crystallization of character in the likeness of our Lord. After having attained a heart-likeness to Christ, we must *hold it fast,* and see that in all the testings which the Lord permits to come upon us, we are counted by Him as overcomers, not in our own strength, but in that of our Redeemer. This mark of *crystallized* character is not attained so early in our Christian experience as is the mark of character-development. But by fighting the good fight until the end of our course, we *crystallize* our characters in love for the principles of righteousness, for God, for the brethren and even for our enemies. If thus faithful, we shall win the prize of glory, honor and immortality.

PERFECTION, NOT CONSECRATION, THE MARK.

There is no reason to think that our *consecration* is the mark; for our testing, our proving comes *after* our consecration, and not *before it.* No one would be at the mark merely because he is consecrated, but because he had endured the testing, thus proving that his consecration was from the heart and that he was sincere in the devotion of his every power to the service of God. We cannot suppose that the mark is reached the next moment after consecration. Some degree of character-development must be possessed; there must be some mark of character, in order that God may count that person worthy of everlasting life.

God's standard of character is perfection, which must be manifested by loyalty and obedience under whatever tests He permits to come to individuals upon *any plane* of life. No one will get the prize of everlasting life unless he successfully passes those tests. We realize that the Church has been under trial throughout the Gospel Age, as to her worthiness to obtain "glory, honor and immortality"—joint-heirship with her Lord.—Rom. 8:17.

From the Scriptures we learn that throughout the Messianic Age the world will be tried by The Christ, and that even after passing that test they will not receive the reward of everlasting life until God shall have proved them at the end of Christ's reign by loosing Satan for a "little season." (1 Cor. 15:24; Rev. 20:7-10.) The fact that the world is thus to be tried by both The Christ and God confirms the thought the God has a standard, or mark, of character to be attained by all those who are loyal and obedient to Him—on any plane of existence.

While this mark of character to be attained by the world during Messiah's reign is not the one to which St. Paul refers in our text, nevertheless there is such a character-mark to be reached by mankind. Those who then attain the mark will have everlasting life on the human plane. But those who attain the mark to which the Apostle refers will be given eternal life on the divine plane.

THE MARK OF CHARACTER-CRYSTALLIZATION.

The Apostle was a noble example of one who had reached the mark. So far as we know, he was ready to die at any time; hence it was not this mark of character-development to which he had not attained. He had not yet attained to the *prize itself*, and could not do so until his change should come. He was constantly pressing along, trusting that God would give him all the things that are in reservation for "them that love him." (1 Cor. 2:9.) We could not think the Apostle to mean that he would reach this mark of character-development *just at the moment before death*. This would be an absurdity of thought.

Our Lord Jesus was at the mark of perfect character at the time of His consecration; and He maintained Himself at the mark. As a sacrifice He would have been acceptable at any time. It was His part to consecrate His life and not to hold it back. It was the Father's part so to arrange matters that the Jews might not take our Lord until the Father's hour for Him had come. In everything that He did He submitted Himself to the Father's will. Our Lord spoke of His "cup" as the one which the Father had prepared for Him.—John 18:11.

If our Lord had determined for Himself the time and the manner of His death, then *He* was pouring the cup. If the Jews had determined these points, then *they* were pouring the cup. But neither our Lord nor the Jews did so, for both time and manner were foretold by the Prophets. Our Lord took the cup and accepted it *as the Father's providence for Him*. If the Father's providence had led to His death a year sooner or two years sooner, if the Father's will had been expressed in our Lord's crucifixion at an earlier time, even then it would have been well with Him. But He "learned obedience by the things which He suffered."—Heb. 5:8; 2:10.

At Jordan our Lord was shown to be perfect and to have made a perfect consecration, both by the descent of the Holy Spirit and by the voice of Jehovah. (Matt. 3:16, 17). He had also a perfect body—though it was earthly—in which the New Creature operated. But His *obedience* must be *tested*—His *loyalty even unto death*. Whatever the degree of testing to which our Lord might have been subjected, it was just the *right amount*, according to the Father's wisdom. Our Lord would have been just as much an overcomer had He died at any time after His consecration. But if He had died sooner than He did, it would merely have proved that the Father did not require as much *evidence* of our Lord's faithfulness and loyalty as He did require.

OUR LORD AN OVERCOMER AT CONSECRATION.

Here someone may ask, "Is it proper to say that our Lord was an overcomer as a New Creature at the time when He made His consecration?"

Our answer is, Yes. An *overcomer* is a *victor*. The word does not imply that a man has completed the victory, however; for we sometimes say, He will lead them from victory to victory. So with our Lord. *He continued faithful* as an overcomer down unto death; but He was not counted as an overcomer until death. Between the Father and our Lord as a human being there was no Mediator, and as a New Creature there was neither Robe to cover nor Advocate to represent in case of any deviation from the will of God; and the slightest deflection therefrom would have meant the Second Death.

The Scriptures give us two pictures of our Lord as an overcomer at His consecration, where He gained the first great victory over His flesh. The first of these pictures (Lev. 16:11), the killing of the bullock on the Day of Atonement, represents the death of our Lord's humanity at the moment when He consecrated Himself at Jordan. There He gained a victory and continued victorious until the end of His course.

The second picture is found in Rev. 5:2-7. Here our Lord is represented by a newly slain lamb. He was not this newly slain lamb at His death when He had finished His course, but at His consecration, when He began His course. The proclamation which the Revelator heard was, "Who is worthy to open the Book, and to loose the seals thereof?" We read that John wept much. "And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the Book and to loose the seven seals thereof. . . . And He came and took the Book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the Throne." Our Lord alone was worthy of the honor of receiving the Divine Plan into His care. We also read that John looked and saw the newly slain Lamb open the Book.—Rev. 6.

After our Lord had entered upon His consecration He was the newly slain Lamb. Then the Father gave into His hand the scroll of the great Divine Plan of the Ages—the scroll written on both inside and outside. The outside He was already able to read. But the inside, which contained information on spiritual things, remained sealed.

As soon as our Lord came up out of the water after His baptism, He was begotten of the Holy Spirit and began to understand spiritual things. "The heavens (higher things) were opened unto Him." The time when He began to be considered the slain Lamb, the time when the scroll was delivered to Him, was the time of His consecration.

SUBMISSION THE FIRST REQUISITE — PATIENT ENDURANCE THE SECOND.

A good illustration of the process of character-development and crystallization is afforded by the work of a potter. First, he must select the right kind of clay, for some clays would produce very coarse ware, others would crack or warp in the drying, and still others would not stand the intense heat. Having selected the proper clay, the potter subjects it to very many processes of grinding, mixing and wetting until it comes from the mill a soft, plastic mass of the consistency of tough dough, ready for the potter's use. Then comes the moulding into the article desired. The dish is formed, or shaped, with care, and dried. Next it is placed in the kiln and fired with an intense heat for two or three days and nights. Then it requires a long time to cool before it can be removed from the kiln. But even then it is only a porous, leaky vessel, altogether unfit for use until it has been dipped into a liquid glaze, or slip, which it readily absorbs.

Again it is subjected to the heat of the glaze kiln, which not only melts the glaze, but converts it into a perfectly transparent glaze all over the surface, making the article beautifully smooth and comely. But if the vessel is of very choice porcelain, to be made still more attractive to the eye by decorations, the ornamentation and gilding must be done at this stage, and the vessel must again be placed in the kiln for a third firing. Some vessels which have stood all the other tests, fail at this point and are cast into the waste heap. But if the vessel passes successfully the last test, it is ready for the service for which it was designed.

So in our Lord's case. Not only was He perfect as a man, but His own *will* was in complete subjection to the *Father's will*. *When trials came, there was no swerving, no twisting, no bending*. He was of the proper material. His heart (applying this word to the mind) was of the proper character. SO MUST IT BE WITH US. Those who will be accepted and found worthy of the great reward will be of His character-likeness in this respect; they will be *loyal to God's will.* Not only will they endeavor both to *ascertain and to do the Father's will,* but they will be in heart submission to that will *in every degree. The "cup" they will be required to drink is the same that our Lord drank and "ALL OF IT"!*

To follow in His steps, we must first reach this mark of character-development; and having done all, we must *stand* there. It is well to repeat the thought that it will not do for us to think that one reaches the mark of proper character-development just at the *moment of death.* Character should be attained as soon as possible. But having reached this character-development called the "mark," it is for us to *stand faithful* (Stand Fast), and not be thrust away from it by the opposition of the world, the flesh and the Devil. All such opposition must be endured before we can win the prize. Some of the noblest characters, who have been in an acceptable condition, and used of the Lord, did not get to the *mark* until they had passed through certain severe experiences.

"WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST."

The thought of the Apostle seems to be, Here is a certain line of conduct and character-development which God has *marked out; and it is the same for all who are* in the race. The life of Christ is the rule. If we would attain the mark, obtain the prize, we must follow this line, or rule, or mark.

The Apostle Paul had but one mind or will. "This *one thing* I do," he said. He was not a double-minded man, at one time thinking he would like to serve the Lord, at another time himself, and then again the Adversary, etc. He had accepted the Divine proposition to give *all* his talents to the service of the Lord. He had before his mind the great promise that God had made. For him there was but *one thing* in life.

The Scriptures tell us that during the Gospel Age God has sent out a special call, or invitation, and that those who have accepted that call have "exceeding great and precious promises" of wonderful things to look forward to. All who accept the call should practically forget ALL the trifling things of life in order to attain these promises. There is but one way to win the prize—by manifesting to God faithfulness, obedience and loyalty. *CHARACTER,* NOT *TALENT,* MAKES US ACCEPTABLE. God could give anyone intellectual powers as good as ours or better. He will not grant anyone a place in the Kingdom on account of physical strength or endurance. He will not admit anyone to the Kingdom because of worldly prosperity or honor of men, or because of riches.

CONDITIONS REQUIRED IN THE RACE.

What then is God seeking? To what had He called us? The Apostle Peter says that God has "called us to glory and virtue." (2 Pet. 1:3.) Certain conditions God requires of those who will run in the race. He requires that none be proud, but that they possess humility. And He will have no one in the Kingdom of His Elect who is weak, vacillating, so far as his *mind* is concerned. He may not have a strong *intellect;* but he must manifest to God that he has a *strong will and firm determination, and that he has cut off everything in life in order to win the prize.* He must also demonstrate his *loyalty* to God. He must not merely seek glory, but *he must recognize and appreciate his responsibilities to God.*

Loyalty is one of the great tests of character-loyalty to *God,* to His *Word,* loyalty to *PRINCIPLE.* Whatever follows, the Christian must be submissive to God, trustful and faithful. To such alone could we expect God to give the great blessing promised to overcomers. Hence we see that the Apostle was quite right in giving up *all* that he might serve God, that he might please the Father, and thus attain to this glorious reward of joint-heirship with His Son.

"EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVETH."

Not necessarily all who *make a consecration,* but all whose consecration God *accepts,* all whom He begets of His Holy Spirit to become New Creatures, will have the opportunity of reaching this mark of *crystallization* of character before they die. These will have full testing—"Every son *whom He receiveth*" (Heb. 12:6). This promise guarantees that they shall have trials and difficulties to develop them in the proper character-likeness of our Lord; and that none of their experiences will be cut short of this attainment. God will see to it that they have the full opportunity to develop character-likeness to Christ. Those who turn to sin wilfully, deliberately, will fall into the Second Death. Others may fall from the priestly class into the Great Company. But even these must have sufficient time to manifest their loyalty to God.

At the time of His consecration, our Lord was at the mark by virtue of His *perfection.* We are not at the mark at the time of our consecration; for we are *imperfect.* But we wish to do the Lord's will; and we have given ourselves to ascertain what that will is in order that we may render intelligent obedience thereto. In our Lord's case He had no such imperfections to overcome as we have. At the time of His consecration He loved His neighbor as Himself, and He loved God with all His heart.

When we consecrate ourselves, we agree to do this; but we do not know what it means; just as St. Peter "wist not" what he said at the time of the transfiguration in the Mount: "Lord, It is good for us to be here. If Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." (Matt. 17:4.) Neither did the two Apostles know what they were asking when they requested Jesus that they might sit the one on His right and the other on His left hand in the Kingdom. Our Lord said to them, "Ye know not what ye ask."—Matt. 20:22.

Since at the time of our consecration we do not fully understand what we do, therefore we do a great deal of running to reach the mark. This our Lord had no need to do; for He was perfect.

At consecration He was at the mark of perfect character, so that had He died at any subsequent time He would have received the reward of the Father, who said, "This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:17.) At His baptism our Lord was at that mark of character which merited the promised reward of the Father, and to which we must attain before we can secure everlasting life, either on the plane of glory or otherwise.

Stephen, who was martyred very soon after Pentecost, must have lived habitually near to the Lord; for he, like Nathaniel, was an "Israelite indeed," in whom was no guile. The fact that the Truth of God came to such as these men means that so far as their heart attitude was concerned they had been very near to the Lord under the Law as their schoolmaster (Greek, pedagogue), so that when brought to Christ they could quickly learn of Him. So it appears to be with us now. The differences in our natural education in right and wrong, in truth and error, are such that we cannot tell just how long it will take for each to attain to the character-likeness of our Lord and thus to prove worthy of eternal life.

"PUT YE ON THE LORD CHRIST."

We have suggested that the Lord's people, at the time of their consecration and begetting of the Holy Spirit, are not ready for the Kingdom, but require development, which time alone can accomplish. Notwithstanding this suggestion, is there not a sense in which God's people are regarded *perfect* at the time of their consecration—at the moment of their acceptance? Our answer is, Yes; they are *counted* so, but are not so actually. The flesh is reckoned perfect so that God can accept their offering.

But at this time the New Creature is merely a babe in Christ and has not yet attained to the stature of manhood. Therefore, the necessity exists for entering the School of Christ and for "putting on Christ," as the Apostle expresses it. We begin to put on Christ after consecration, and after our begetting of the Holy Spirit. The babe grows into a child and the child into a man. (Eph. 4:14, 13.) The work of growing up into Christ is necessary before the child of God would be fit for the Kingdom. The difference between a babe in Christ and one fit for the Kingdom is that the latter has been tried and tested and has proved himself to be an overcomer.

When our Lord Jesus was at Jordan He was an overcomer. (Heb. 10:9.) He was perfect and had correspondingly a larger appreciation of what He did than we have respecting our course when we consecrate. But He tells us, "Fear not, little flock," "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."—Luke 12:32; John 16:33.

Yet even in our Lord's case, while He was an overcomer at the moment of His consecration, He really did not win the prize of the divine nature until the end of His race-course, until there had been *demonstrated* a sufficiency of worthiness for that high exaltation; and we know that the Father continued tests of obedience even unto the death on the cross. It was not until after this that our Lord was fully accepted as an overcomer, to whom it was granted to sit with the Father in His Throne.

THE GREAT TEST IS TO REMAIN AT THE MARK.

The possession of perfection necessarily means that one is at the mark, as in the case of Adam. *The test is not whether one can REACH the mark, but whether one will REMAIN at the mark—having done all to STAND"* (Eph. 6:13). When we reach the mark of character which God approves in every sense of the word, let us *CONTINUE THERE.* When our Lord came into the world He was perfect, loyal, at the mark—God's standard, perfection. Whether or not He would be moved away from the mark by the contradiction of sinners against Himself, was to be proved. But none of these tests led Him to abandon His determination to continue at the mark. *So it should be with us*—to the best of our ability.

The Spirit of God is the same whether manifested in Himself or in angels or in men or in New Creatures. We do not find the Spirit of God manifest in the majority of men, because of sin. We would find the Spirit of God manifest in angels. We should find the Spirit of God very manifest in the saints, who should carry with them into the new relationship all that they have naturally of the character-likeness to the Lord. The graces of spirit exhibited in the Lord's people are properly to be considered fruits of the Holy Spirit; for their possessors have become New Creatures, have entered into the race for the prize of the high calling. Some saints might be able by reason of natural qualities to make more rapid progress than would others in developing and perfecting these fruits and graces of the Spirit.

"RESPECT UNTO THE RECOMPENSE OF THE REWARD."

Some times the question arises, Should not the Lord's people preferably strive for character-likeness to Christ, with no particular desire as to what the Lord's reward will be? We answer, No. We should have "respect unto the recompense of the reward." In order to have the proper respect for the reward which God promises, it is necessary that we hold it up before us continually, and that we never lose sight of the prize.

Our Lord Jesus does not deprecate this looking at the prize. Listen to His words: "Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine Own Self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." (John 17:5.) Thus He prayed to the Father for the reward which the manifestation of His obedience would bring. So it should be with us; not that we have a right to insist that our efforts be rewarded, but that we should think of the blessing which God has promised those who love Him, as "exceeding great and precious." Many in the Nominal church do not see these things.

Let us keep the goal distinctly before our eyes. Doubtless the Lord meant knowledge of the prize to serve as a stimulus for our upbuilding and strengthening. We look for "glory, honor and immortality"; and it is right for us to seek for them. Any other attitude would be *FALSE modesty. If the thought* that it is presumption for us to aspire to the high calling comes before our minds, let us remember that our Lord wants us to be so inspired by the "great and precious promises" that we will work for these things which He had set before us, and that it would be presumption for us to *refuse* what He *offers* to us.

FREE MORAL AGENCY A FACTOR IN CHARACTER-DEVELOPMENT.

Character may be viewed from two different standpoints. When Adam was created, he was a man of great and good character—"crowned with glory and honor." He was perfect, the image of God. There is a difference, however, between a character thus *given,* and one that is *developed and tested* by the exercise of *free will.* Our Heavenly Father desires that His intelligent creatures exercise their wills. Therefore instead of giving Adam a part of His own character-likeness and eliminating that which we call moral choice, He chose to give Adam His character-likeness, including free moral agency. "So God created man in His own image." God foreknew the fall of man and all the circumstances connected with it.

He knew that the permission of evil for a time would ultimately result in great blessings for all. He knew that the time would come when every creature in heaven and in earth would be obedient to Him, not only because there was no opportunity of doing otherwise, but from *choice.*

Those who are appreciative of God's character should desire to have this character-likeness. Only such will merit everlasting life amongst either angels or men. God is testing along these lines the worthiness of those who are on trial for life eternal. Hence, "The Father seeketh such to worship Him 'as' worship Him in spirit and in truth"—intelligently.—John 4:23, 24.

HE MUST "LOVE RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATE INIQUITY."

In the formation of character, we see that the lessons which we learn in the School of Christ are very helpful to us. Originally, man was made in the image of God. Yet in us the image is blurred, indistinct. Those who learn the lessons now and appreciate them to the full will be given no further trial. Those who have not had a sufficiency of opportunity will have a full trial in the age to come. Under the discipline, the chastenings and the rewards of that time, they will learn how much better is righteousness than sin, Truth than error. They will develop in the character-likeness of God, which Adam lost, and will see the exceeding sinfulness of sin. They will learn both to *will* and to *do* righteousness. All who fail to learn this lesson will be judged unworthy of eternal life.

We see that the angels willed of themselves whether they would be obedient, or be disobedient and enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. All the holy angels, who are now in favor with God, are such as have had their testing and have come off victors. Their example will prove more and more a lesson to us as we come to understand it. As a result of this knowledge, we see in God the noblest sentiment that could actuate our Creator and Father in dealing with His creatures; and we are glad that we have chosen to do His will concerning us.

Finally it is important that we should keep in mind the fact that since true love on our part will manifest itself in *obedience, then disobedience is an evidence of a loss of love,* as viewed from the Lord's standpoint, a deflection from loyalty, a failure to endure the tests. We must agree that the Lord's standpoint of judgment is a reasonable one. Should one ask, How would it be if we should disobey through ignorance? The answer is, that the Lord has made provision against our ignorance: First, He has given us the Word of Truth, "that the man of God may be perfect (perfectly informed) thoroughly furnished unto all good words"; and second, He has promised to supply such helps to the spirit of holiness and the understanding of His Word, as will enable us to do what is pleasing in His sight.—2 Tim. 3:17; John 16:13, 14.

Love is the crown of all graces, "the fulfilling of the law." Without a fervent glowing love, it will be impossible to render obedience or to stand the tests for development and crystallization of character arranged for by Divine Love. Our Lord tells us that He was beloved of the Father; and the Father Himself declared, "This is My beloved Son." We can readily see why our *Lord Jesus* was greatly beloved, for He expressed and fully manifested the Father's love. But it *astounds* us to know that this same love is exercised by the Father toward *us!* "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon *us,* that *we* should be called the *sons of* God!" "The Father Himself loveth you."—1 John 3:1; John 16:27.

LOVING OBEDIENCE BRINGS JOY AND PEACE.

Let us, dearly beloved, be more than ever careful respecting the Word of the Lord; let us not by negligence give evidence of a decay of love. Our Lord points out that His continuance in the Father's love, as the well beloved Son, with all which this implies, was because of His *obedience* to the *Father's will;* and that following the same line, He must require that *we* should be obedient to Him if we would *abide* in His *love* and share His Throne and glory. —John 15:10.

Our Lord's instructions and commandments are not intended to terrify us, nor to deprive us of happiness. On the contrary, "These things have I spoken unto you that *My joy* may be *in you,* and that your joy might be *filled full.*" (John 15:11.) Those who give surest evidence of living nearest the Lord well know that obedience to the Lord's words, together with the privilege thus obtained of abiding in Him and His Love, is the greatest joy, a joy which wholly outweighs all the trifling pleasures which the world has to offer. It is the joy and peace which "passeth all understanding," which rules in the heart, and which brings with it the promise, the assurance, "not only of the life which now is, but also of that which is to come."—1 Tim. 4:8. Z. '12, 255-259.

RUNNING FOR THE MARK, AND STANDING FAST THEREAT

The Apostle represents our present experience as a race-course; and exhorts that we lay aside every weight and every besetting sin, every weakness of the flesh, and every earthly ambition, that we may run with patience the race set before us in the Gospel;—that we may attain unto the *mark* of the prize; and that having done all we should *STAND*—faithful at that mark, complete in Christ. (Phil. 3:13, 14; Heb. 12:1; Eph. 6:13.) This gives us the thought of a race-course, with its first, second, third and fourth quarter-marks, and the besetments and difficulties and oppositions and allurements en route, and of ourselves starting into this race, desiring to attain the mark of perfect Love;—knowing that unless we do attain that mark we will not be copies of God's dear Son, and cannot, therefore, in the largest sense please God; and hence cannot be joint-heirs with Jesus in the Kingdom. The whole race-course is Love, from gate to finish. As we enter the gate it is with grateful Love toward God for his favor toward us in Christ, in the forgiveness of our sins. It is this *duty-love* which at the beginning leads us to present our bodies living sacrifices. We say to ourselves that if God has done so much for us, we *ought* to show our appreciation: Christ laid down his life on our behalf, and we *ought* to lay down our lives for the brethren.

This ought-to, or duty-love, is quite proper, reasonable, true, but it is not sufficient. It must in turn lead us on to a still higher kind of Love, and by the time we have run to the first quarter mark, we still have duty-love, but beyond it have attained a love of appreciation. We learn better to appreciate divine Love—to see that God's Love was in no sense of the word selfish, but the outworking of his grand, noble character. We come to appreciate something of divine justice, divine wisdom, divine power, divine love; and as we behold these qualities of our Creator we come to love them, and thenceforth we practice righteousness, not merely because it is our duty, but because we love righteousness.

Pressing along the race-course still further, we attain to the second quarter-mark, and find that by this time we have not only learned to love righteousness, but proportionately are learning to hate sin: and we find in our hearts a growing sympathy with the divine program of rolling back the great wave of sin which has submerged the world and brought with it its wages of death. This second quarter-mark begets in us an energy, a "quickening," an activity for righteousness and against sin.

Our Love is growing, and we press along for the third quarter-mark. By the time we reach it, our duty-love, plus love for the principles of righteousness, has extended, not only to the divine character, and included dislike for every wicked thing doing injury to mankind, and contravening the divine character and plan, but at this mark we have attained a position of broader sympathy for others; we begin to share God's sentiment, not only of opposition to sin, but also of love for, and sympathy with, all who are seeking the way of righteousness and holiness. By this time we are able to recognize the brethren in a somewhat different light than ever before. We can now see them as New Creatures, and differentiate between *them* and their mortal bodies, whose imperfections are obvious to us. We learn to love the brethren as New Creatures, and to sympathize with them in the various weaknesses, misjudgments, etc., of their flesh. So keen becomes our Love for them that we have pleasure in laying down our lives on their behalf—daily, hourly, sacrificing our own earthly interests or pleasures, or conveniences, giving of our time, our influence, or what-not, to assist or serve them.

But still we press along the line and toward the "mark," for there is still a higher Love than this which we must attain,—the fourth and last quarter-mark—"the mark of the prize." What love is this? How can it be greater than self-sacrificing love for the brethren, in full devotion to God and to the principles of righteousness and Love? We answer that still greater Love is the kind which the Lord has stipulated, when he says that we must learn to love even our enemies also. It was while we were enemies, aliens, strangers from God through wicked works, that "God so loved the world"; it was while we were yet sinners that He gave his Only Begotten Son on our behalf. This is the standard of *perfect love,* and we must not stop short of it. Whoever would be accepted of the Lord as a member of the New Creation in glory must attain to this love of enemies.

Not that he is to love his enemies *as* he loves the brethren, for this is not the pattern set us—God does not love his enemies *as* he loves his sons, his friends; and Jesus did not love his enemies *as* he loved his disciples. But God loved his enemies so as to be ready and willing to do for them whatever could be justly done; and Jesus loved his enemies so that he was heartily willing to do good to them—he bears no enmity or grudge toward them in return for their hatred, but is ready to pour out upon them in due time his Millennial blessings, that they may all come to the knowledge of the truth, and that even those who pierced him may look upon him and weep when God shall pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication, in due time. (Zech. 12:10.) We must have the love for enemies which our Lord describes, saying, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you." (Matt. 5:44.) We must let no bitterness, animosity or rancor of any kind dwell in our hearts. They must be so full of Love that not even an enemy could stir up in our hearts an evil or malicious sentiment.

Oh, what long-suffering and brotherly kindness is implied in such an attainment of character as would find nothing, even in an enemy, to stir it to malice, hatred or strife! And this is the "mark" for which we are to run, as New Creatures. We have professed appreciation of this spirit of Love; we have professed devotion to it; *we have consecrated our lives in accord with its principles; and now we are being tested to see to what extent our professions were truthful.* The Lord very graciously gives us time to run this race, to develop this character. "He knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust." Nevertheless, it is essential to us that we conform to these arrangements if we would be joint-heirs with God's dear Son, as members of the New Creation.

Our Lord Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, did not need to run this race; did not need to develop these various features of love; for being perfect he had these in perfection at the beginning of his career. His testing was whether or not he would stand firmly by these principles, characteristics, would continue to love God and righteousness supremely, and continue to love the brethren so as to lay down His life for them, and to continue to love his enemies so as to delight to do them good; whether he would *stand firm* at the standard of perfect love. We know how he demonstrated his loyalty to Love in all its degrees, in that he laid down his life, not only for his friends, but also for his enemies, who crucified him.

This experience also must be ours. We must *attain* to the standard of perfect Love in our hearts even though in our flesh we may not always be able fully to express the sentiments of our hearts.

As our Lord was tested at the "mark" of perfect Love, *so all of us are to be tested after we reach it.* We are not, therefore, to expect to reach that "mark" merely with the last gasp of life; but as quickly as possible. The measure of our zeal and love will be indicated to God and to the brethren by the speed with which we attain to this "mark."

The Apostle's words, "*Having done all, stand*" (Eph. 6:13), imply that after we have reached the "mark" of perfect Love there will still be plenty of trials for us—trials of faith, trials of patience, trials of all the various elements of Love. The world is not a friend to grace, to help us onward in the right direction; Satan is still our Adversary, and will be able to stir up plenty of opposition,—to force us back from the position attained. This is our testing. WE MUST HOLD FAST TO ALL TO WHICH WE ATTAIN; we must "press down upon the mark" until it shall cost us our earthly life—laying down our lives in God's service for the brethren, and in doing good unto all men as we have opportunity. "Faithful is he who called us," who promises us succor and every needed assistance in this way. His grace is sufficient for us.—I Thess. 5:34; 2 Cor. 12:9. . . .

The New Commandment, which the Lord gave to all those who become his followers, has been well termed

THE GOLDEN RULE.

Gold, as we have already seen, is a symbol of that which is divine; hence, the Golden Rule is the divine rule. . . . The Golden Rule of Love, which the Lord gives to the New Creation now, and which no others than the New Creation can at present appreciate, or even understand, is of a positive kind:—"Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you." This is positive goodness, living, active Love. If members of the New Creation fail at times to comply with every feature of this Golden Rule, the Law of their being, it must be to their serious regret and chagrin unless they are merely "babes" in the new way. And if any violation of this rule brings pain and regret, it is a sure sign that the violation was not wilful, not of the heart, not the New Creature's violation of principle, but, at most, a violation connived at or stumbled into by the flesh, contrary to the desires of the spirit or intention. However, in proportion as the new mind is alive toward God, and zealous to do his will, in that same proportion it will be quick, alert and energetic in guarding the "earthen vessel" in which it resides. It will put on the armor of God, that it may be able to fight a good warfare against the weaknesses of the flesh. It will insist that if an error has been committed, either in word or deed, a restitution, with good interest, shall, if possible, be quickly rendered; that thus the "earthen vessel," finding itself opposed and put to shame, may become less active in its opposition to the new mind.

This law of the New Creature affects his relationship to God. He recognizes the meaning of the expression, "Love the Lord with *ALL* thy heart, with *ALL* thy mind, with *ALL* thy being, with *ALL* thy strength." He finds no room for self here, except as self shall be fully in accord with God. . . .

As our new minds, new wills, begotten of the holy Spirit, develop, they are gradually "changed from glory to glory" of heart quality; and thus changed in our hearts, our minds, our wills, our intentions (and so far as possible also outwardly), we become fit or "meet," according to the divine promise, for the great and final resurrection *change*, when that which is sown in weakness and corruption shall be raised in power and glory, a spiritual New Creation,—the Christ of God. . . .

Those who by consecration come under this perfect Law of Love, and who, under it, lay down their lives for the brethren and for the truth's sake, and for righteousness' sake—these faithful ones will be counted worthy to be the Lord's agents and joint-heirs with his Beloved Son in the great work of blessing the world. And how necessary this qualification for their work,—how necessary it evidently is that those who would be the teachers and helpers and judges and rulers of the world,—thus blessing all the families of the earth during the Millennial age,—should develop to the full and be tested in this qualification of Love, in order to be merciful and faithful Royal Priests! F. 369-378.

GODLINESS ATTRACTS PERSECUTION

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."—2 Tim. 3:12.

Godliness represents in general the condition of righteousness, opposition to sin, as God is opposed to sin—a condition in harmony with justice, as He is just; generosity and kindness and love, as He is generous and kind and loving. There are kind, generous and noble characters in the world who are not Christians. These may have more or less of opposition from others who are evilly disposed—as darkness always opposes light; yet these noble people exercise moderation in their righteousness—they are not righteous overmuch. They do not go to an extreme in their religion, as it is sometimes expressed. These fine characters might occasionally get some persecution, politically or otherwise; but even the enemies of such would have respect for them.

But the Apostle in our text limits persecution to "those who live godly in Christ Jesus." What is the difference between *living godly* and living *godly in Christ Jesus?* We answer that because of their special relationship to Christ Jesus, God's people have a special enlightenment. They see more clearly the *principles* of God's Justice. They have a more exacting rule by which their lives are governed. Others do not see these deeper things of the Divine Plan and the special arrangement God has made with the Church.

Those who are "in Christ Jesus" have an intelligent knowledge that they have entered into a Covenant of Sacrifice. *They realize that they are not to compromise their religion in any way; they are not to compromise with sin, nor with the world. They must uphold the PRINCIPLES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, even to the detriment of their own earthly interests.*

The godly *not* in Christ Jesus—those who have a measure of Godlikeness—may indulge in a great many things that would not be wrong for the world—not sinful, not immoral, not unkind. With the Christian, however, *all of his time, talent, influence, money, are consecrated to the ONE service,* according to what he understands to be the Lord's Word and the spirit of that Word. The worldly man who is righteous might feel perfectly free to give of his money for various causes and purposes, that would be reasonable and proper in themselves; while the Christian would ask himself, What is the Lord's will, the Lord's way?

THE CHRISTIAN STEWARD RESTRICTED.

The Christian is restricted in his use of money; for he always considers as to how the Lord would have him use it. The Christian uses his money for the preaching of the Gospel and the publishing of it in various ways; while other people might use their money for large benefactions and endowment of colleges. The Christian would reason: There are many opportunities for people to get education along earthly lines, and I believe the Lord would have me as His child to use His money to help people get spiritual education.

Likewise in the use of his time; the natural man might say, We will have a certain evening for attending a good opera. We will not go to any disreputable place, but we will spend a certain amount each season on the opera. Or, we will be patrons of art and music and literature. We must adopt a course that will win the approval of society. That will be the wise thing to do. But the Christian says, My time, my money, are consecrated to the Lord. I am His steward, I can use these in a better way. A worldly man may be a patron of art and spend a thousand dollars—or ten thousand dollars—on a single painting, because he wants art to flourish. Or he might buy a fine piece of sculpture to adorn his home, but this is not the course for me. I must consider the Lord's will for me as His servant.

The Christian has limitations which the worldly do not have. But we are glad for all good men and good women, who can be good and noble even though not in Christ Jesus. We are glad to esteem them. There are noble people in the world. There are some godly ones outside the Church; godly to a certain degree; and they are likely to come to see something of the Truth, if they are really noble characters. The godly of this world will get a blessing in the Restitution time. Every godly thing that they have done, every act of generosity, will get its reward. And by cultivating their higher sentiments, they will have fewer steps to retract.

SPECIALLY GODLY ARE SPECIALLY PERSECUTED.

The persecutions which come to the godly in Christ Jesus are special persecutions. We are not to expect much of this from the Body of Christ. A man is not expected to use his fist to strike his own eye, nor is it to be expected that one hand will injure the other hand. It may be that the skin on one hand is rough, and will sometimes scratch the other one. But *we cannot be members of the same Body and persecute each other.* Persecution is something that is *intended* and *pursued, or followed up.* Persecution is not merely one act or one word—it is a succession of unkind words and acts with a view to punishing someone for adhering to an opinion or course of conduct.

So persecution comes from a certain class called by Jesus *the world.* But the class that Jesus called *the world* are those who had a *form* of godliness, but did not have the *power thereof.* Christianity has its counterfeits, as has money. So the Apostle speaks of a class who would take the name of the Lord upon them and misuse that name. And there are people in the world today who do not know the difference between the genuine and the counterfeit—between Truth and error—and who do not *want* to know, and who keep out of the way of *being told.* They somehow know that there would come a certain measure of condemnation to themselves if they recognized the real facts and did not act in accordance with them.

They are not all bad people by any means. There are very many good people among the tares; but there is no real wheat among the tares—no real nutriment. But these tares pose as the Church of Christ; the tare systems pose as Christianity. And from this class usually come the persecutions. They try to crowd out the wheat, or to choke it and make it unfruitful. It was so in our Lord's day. Those to whom the Lord referred as persecutors were not the Gentile world of His day, but the worldly ones of the Jews—those who were not fully consecrated to the Lord, but *who thought they were.* . . .

There were others who went through many of the forms and ceremonies, and who kept the various admonitions of the Law, and its feasts and fasts; but they were not the "Israelites indeed in whom was no guile." And later they became the persecutors of Christ and those who walk in His steps of sacrifice.

PROFESSED CHRISTIANS PERSECUTORS.

And so those who live godly in Christ Jesus have their persecutions, not so much from the worldly class as from professing Christians. There is a class in Churchianity today that has a great deal of pride and self-satisfaction. They are *upholding a large institution.* If anything seems to be *inimical to that institution, they are wrathful and wish to persecute.* . . .

We should have a great deal of sympathy and not feel specially angry with these people. This does not mean that we should be *glad* of *persecution*—no persecution "for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous." (Heb. 12:11.) But if we know that we are suffering for righteousness' sake, then we know the Spirit of God rests upon us. It is those who know that they suffer for Christ's sake, and who TAKE IT GLADLY because it is the will of God, that may rejoice, because the persecution is working out in them blessed effects. Let us then

"Be still beneath His tender care,
For He will make the tempest cease;
And bring from out the anguish here,
The afterward of peace."

"THE LORD YOUR GOD DOTH PROVE YOU."

There is a particular reason why God should permit persecution to come upon His consecrated ones. "The Lord Your God doth prove you," test you. Why? What is He proving? We profess to be His Loyal children. We profess to be laying down all that we love. And now "The Lord your God doth prove you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul."—Deut. 8:2; 13:3.

How much will you endure? How patiently will you endure? To what extent will you endure? Those who will endure most, and endure most patiently, will give evidence of the best character. And those who demonstrate the best character will have the highest positions in the Kingdom; each will get a position according to his faithfulness. But as star differeth from star in glory so it will be in the Kingdom. He who fights the greatest fight against his own nature and demonstrates most the love and zeal of his heart, such is the one who will have a high place.

"How goes the fight with thee?
The lifelong battle with all evil things?
Thine no low strife, and thine no selfish aim;
It is the war of giants and of things.
Heed not the throng of foes!
To fight 'gainst foes is still the Church's lot.
Side thou with God, and thou must win the day;
Woe to the man whom Satan fighteth not!"

Z. '14, 39-40.

It is for us to prove all things that we accept, and then to *hold fast* that which we have proven to be the good, the acceptable, the perfect will of God. As Joshua was told that his good success would be in proportion to his attention to the divine Law, so Spiritual Israelites similarly are informed that their success in making their calling and election sure will be proportionate to their loving, zealous obedience to the divine mesage.—Z. '07, 284.

THE ARCH ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

"Your Adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith."—1 Peter 5:8, 9.

The Authorized Version of the New Testament makes frequent use of the word *devil,* and leaves the impression that there are many devils; but this thought is not borne out by the Scriptures in general. In the New Testament two Greek words are thus translated, *diamonion* and *diabolos.* Of these two words, the first should be properly rendered "demon"; and the second "devil." The *demons* are the unclean spirits, the familiar spirits, the fallen angels; while the *Devil* is Satan. The term Satan signifies *adversary,* opponent; for the Devil is the opponent of righteousness and of Jehovah.

Whoever has failed to discern that there is a Devil is all the more liable to come under the influence of this great, malevolent being, who is portrayed in the Scriptures as the greatest foe to God, to men and to righteousness. St. Paul speaks of the "wiles of the Devil" and warns the Church that her warfare is with "wicked spirits in the heavenlies." (Eph. 6:11, 12, margin.) He also mentions "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2), and intimates that it would be impossible for us really to contend with him, for he is too wily, too wise for us.

There is an evil influence constantly exerted in the world, operating against truth, righteousness and purity, and therefore operating against God. The Scriptures inform us that this influence is exerted by the Devil, Satan, who was once a holy angel. It was by permitting pride and ambition to gain control of his heart that Satan became an opponent of God and of righteousness.—1 John 3:8; 1 Tim. 3:6; Isa. 14:12-14.

Although mankind cannot see Satan, yet he can see them, and by means of mental suggestion can gain control of them. He has a variety of ways by which he exercises his influence. The most potent way is through human agents—using one person against another. His favorite method of operating is by putting darkness for light. This he does by making the *good* appear *evil,* the *true, false,* and the *right, wrong.*

St. Peter tells us in our text that Satan goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. The lion has a very stealthy walk. On his feet are soft cushions, which enable him to come very near to his prey before his approach is recognized. It is said that, at this point, when the beast is *about to spring upon his prey,* he roars so loudly that the victim is paralyzed with fear and thus is easily caught.

Satan, the Adversary of the Church, is strong and lion-like, vigilant and fully awake. As the Apostle Paul declares, he seeks to use every opportunity against us. He lies in wait, seeking to devour us. Although he is alert, yet he never *approaches* us with a roar, but creeps stealthily upon us in some unlooked for place or time, to devour us, to overcome us, to crush out our spiritual life, particularly to destroy our faith in God. As those whose ears are trained to detect the footfalls of the lion will hear his steps, while those who are unfamiliar with his habits will not hear the slightest sound, so may we, whose ears the Lord has opened, and whose eyes have been anointed with the eyesalve of consecration and submission to the Lord's will, be of quick perception to recognize the approach of our arch-enemy and to resist him. Let us stand, clad in the full armor which the Word of God supplies, and in His strength wielding the Sword of the Spirit.

St. Paul shows that the most subtle attacks of the Adversary are to be expected through human agencies. Satan works in the hearts of the children of disobedience; and the more honorable they are, and *the more closely identified with the Lord and His people these children of disobedience may be, the greater service they may render to the Adversary*. For this reason, Satan presents himself as an angel of light, and *not* as a messenger of darkness; for well he knows that error and sin will repel the children of light.—Eph. 2:2; 2 Cor. 4:4; 11:14, 15; Eph. 6:11, 12.

Satan uses various methods against those whom God is seeking and calling. As an angel of light, he has done much harm. His constant endeavor is to lead the people of God astray from the Lord and from their covenant of sacrifice. While we know that God is able so to succor His people that the Adversary could not touch them, yet His providences inform us that this is not His way. He permits Satan seemingly to gain a great triumph over the Lord and His people; but in no way does this seeming interruption affect the Divine Plan of the Ages.

By this we do not mean that God is co-operating with Satan and his evil work. God is testing His people, by permitting those conditions that make the way so NARROW that *only the faithful will walk perserveringly to the very end. All others will sooner or later fall out of the way.*

PROPER METHOD OF RESISTANCE.

The Christian's warfare is a fight of faith. St. James' statement, "Resist the Devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:7), does not mean that we are to battle with him in order to confound him. Whoever thinks that he is able to battle along with Satan surely must possess great self-conceit, or else must overestimate his own ability or underestimate that of the Adversary. In any contention, Satan would surely gain the victory.

Malice, envy, hatred and strife, the Apostle says, are the kind of works which Satan supports and into which he endeavors to lead mankind. (Gal. 5:19-21; 1 John 3:8.) His methods are deceptive. His suggestions come along the line of pride and self-conceit. The mental suggestion, "You can do it; you are a person of great ability; do not be afraid; show people what is in you," has led to the downfall of many.

In order to deceive the children of light, Satan transforms himself into an angel (messenger) of light; for well he knows that he would not deceive them, if he were to present himself as a representative of sin. Ever since the fall of Adam, the Devil has sought to entrap mankind. *Particularly for the past eighteen centuries, he has been endeavoring to introduce error into the Church,* in order to produce false Christians—Christians who would be a detriment to the cause of Christ. Evidently he has had much to do with formulating the creeds of Christendom.

The Lord's people are to resist the Devil by not allowing his seductive arguments to have weight with us. We have the sure word of prophecy and the instructions of our Lord and of His Apostles; and if we love the Word of the Lord, we shall seek to be guided by it. "He that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that Wicked One toucheth him not."—1 John 5:18.

The experience of our Lord in the Wilderness affords a good example for all the people of God to follow. He did not seek to keep up the controversy, the discussion with the Adversary; but when the evil thought was presented, He promptly resisted it. Satan was well versed in the Scriptures, portions of which he presented with a view of misleading our Lord into taking a wrong course. Jesus did not say to the Devil, "merely because that is a Scripture, I yield to your argument." On the contrary, He immediately thought of the principle involved, and showed the Adversary wherein he was mistaken. When prophecies were quoted out of order, our Lord made very positive statements to that effect.

This course is a very good one for us to follow. If one of the Lord's people should be drawn by Satan into a discussion about some Scriptural text, and if he should recall, or if another brother should suggest, a text which would answer right to the point of discussion, he should decide, "The Scripture which tells me to 'resist the Devil' is the proper guide to my course of action. I will not stop to discuss what I do not understand." Thus he would "resist," and at the same time *rebuke* the Adversary.

St. Paul urges the Lord's people to put on the whole armor of God, that they may be able to withstand the wiles of the Devil. His statement seems to imply that none will be able to withstand Satan without Divine aid. The Apostle points out the fact that *these* are the days when the whole armor of God will be *necessary*. (Eph. 6:13-18; Rev. 3:10.) *The question may be asked whether those only who* are furnished with the whole armor will be able to stand. The answer is that the Lord is supervising the affairs of His people and that He will see that all who are putting their trust in Him shall have opportunities for putting on the whole armor of God.

Many devote to frivolity the time which they could employ in putting on the armor which God had provided for His people. The Lord is so arranging the matter that such will not be able to withstand the darts of the Adversary; for *He wishes none to STAND* (FAST) *in this evil day except those who are thoroughly consecrated to His will. To these He will render assistance, so that all things shall work together for good to them.* His grace is sufficient to carry all through, who have come to a knowledge of Him and have made a consecration to Him. This grace may be supplied through the Scriptures, through reading matter, through a service or through a hymn; but the protection will be along the lines of the Truth. When we lose the Sword of the Spirit, we lose our only protection against error.

THE LESSON OR CONFIDENCE IN GOD'S WISDOM AND LOVE.

The Adversary's method of attack is well illustrated in the fall of our first parents. Mother Eve should have resisted the suggestion which came to her through the serpent—that God had forbidden that which was for their highest interest in life. She should have said, "I will not entertain such a thought; for to do so would be disloyal to my Creator." When the suggestion to eat came to Father Adam, apparently the thought came also, "You may as well join with her in the partaking of the food. It will be better to die together, for there will be no pleasure in life without her." Adam stopped to reason on the matter, but he did not have a sufficiency of knowledge to permit him to do so successfully. He should have said, "God knows; He arranged it. What He has said is enough for me. I will be true to Him, and trust the results to His Wisdom and Love."

Obedience is the lesson for us to learn from the experience of Adam and Eve. We have not a sufficiency of knowledge with which to reason on some subjects, even if our reasoning faculties were fully developed. Consequently when a suggestion of evil of any kind is made, our only proper course is to say, "No!" "The Lord our God has said that we must not touch it, lest we die." Mother Eve allowed reasoning to come in and thus was persuaded. We should profit by her mistake. A proper confidence in God and a recognition of our own lack of wisdom should decide us immediately. *There should be no controversy.* WE SHOULD SAY, *NO!*

Evidently God is seeking those who are in this attitude of mind. Christ and the Church have been called for this very work of bringing mankind back to perfection of character. Many times the Divine Plan may not seem to us to be the wisest course; and if we should not learn the lesson of absolute trust in the Divine Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power, we *could not* trust God in everything. The Father seeketh such to worship Him as will do so in spirit and in truth, and who have perfect confidence in Him as the One who is all-wise and all-loving to direct and guide their affairs. Those who do not learn this lesson of trust, will not be fit for the responsibilities to be put upon the glorified Church. Let us learn this lesson and be very positive in our endeavors to be in harmony with God.

Faithfulness in trial will develop the overcomers. The Lord does not wish to have in the Little Flock any who are disloyal in any sense of the word. They may be weak in many of the essentials of character, but they are all *LOYAL TO GOD.* The Lord is *seeking those* who will *REMAIN LOYAL* under trials and difficulties, and thus develop characters pleasing to Him. *These are not alarmed at Satan's onslaughts, which are seen to be an occasion for an increase of faith;* for greater is He that is on our part than are all that are against us!

In Pilgrim's Progress this inability of the Wicked One to touch the faithful people of God is very beautifully pictured. While walking in the narrow way, Christian beheld two lions; and for a moment he was terror-stricken. Christian studied the situation and decided to go forward. When he came near the lions, he found that *they were chained.* So it is with our adversaries. They can do no *harm* to the children of God. Although they may roar, yet they cannot injure the *New Creature.*

The New Creature may develop even when the outer man is perishing. Satan succeeded in having the chief priests and Pharisees cause the death of our Lord; but this was the very means by which He entered into glory. In His dealings with our Lord the Father has given us an illustration of His dealings with us. So we may know that even if Satan should appear to get the victory over us, these "light afflictions" will, as we are told, "work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." —2 Cor. 4:17.

We know that we have no power with which to oppose Satan. None is sufficient for these things except the Lord. But He is greater than are Satan and all his angels. We are looking forward with the eye of faith to the things that are unseen. So it behooves us to be steadfast, IMMOVABLE, full of faith, and therefore about to meet whatever the Father permits to come upon us—Z. '13, 54-56.

"HAVING DONE ALL, *STAND*" (*FAST*)

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."—Ephesians 6:13.

This Scripture means much more to Watch Tower readers than to others, because we recognize that we are already in the "evil day." Nevertheless we fear that many fail to make a personal application of the Apostle's words to themselves. It is right enough to apply them to all in Christendom who make a sincere profession of faith in God and devotion to his cause. It is right enough to rejoice that we have by the Lord's grace come to a considerable knowledge of his great Plan of the Ages, and have learned to some extent rightly to divide the Word of Truth and to appreciate the portions which belong to past ages and to the future, and to distinguish these from the Scriptures which appertain to the present time, and to see the harmonious relationship of the whole. It is right enough that we should feel that this implies that we have to some extent heeded the Apostle's words, that we have to some extent taken to us the armor which God has provided in preparation for the present and approaching tests. . . . But there is a danger: We fear that some in whom the good work of grace has begun are too well satisfied with their attainments. . . .

"THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE."

The Apostle, in enumerating the blessings that are ours through Christ and the attainments possible in faith, knowledge, hope and love, declares that the greatest of these is love. He points out that present faith and knowledge will be dwarfed and entirely lost sight of in the perfection of knowledge into which we shall be ushered in our glorious change in the First Resurrection, and that our present hopes will then expire because the realization will have come, and will so far transcend our expectations. But he argues the superiority of love in that it will endure throughout eternity: "Love never faileth," "God is love," "Love is the fulfilling of the Law"; the new commandment is that we love one another with a pure heart fervently. Oh, how much room there still is for progress in this direction, in putting on of the whole armor of God.

Were we to analyze the armor we could find it not merely an armor of knowledge but very largely indeed an armor of faith, an armor containing love as one of its chief elements, and surely in every part riveted together with love. What would our breastplate be worth without this love element? Ah, we see that our dear Redeemer's death constitutes our breastplate, that his love provided the redemption which covers us and protects us, and that it is our appropriation of his love and our reciprocating love for him and for the Father and for the divine law that led us to a full consecration of ourselves to his service. It is behind this breastplate of righteousness—of which the love of God and our love for God and for the Lord Jesus are the chief elements—that we are secure, justified through faith in the precious blood, counted righteous through the love and mercy of God.

And our helmet, does it signify an intellectual knowledge of the Lord? Yes! And yet it is a knowledge based not upon the things that are seen but upon the things that are unseen. Our helmet is a faith-knowledge, and the basis of this faith is an appreciation of the love of God which passeth all understanding, which has begun the good work, not only in our redemption, but in the sanctification of our hearts. The love of God for us and our love for him are most intimately related to this helmet, and whoever would put it on, whoever would be protected by it, must surely recognize the divine law and be responsive in love himself.

And what of our shield of faith? Is not the love of God, the mercy of God and of our Lord Jesus, the basis of our faith? We are not trusting either to our works or our knowledge for salvation, for both of these prove to us that we are unworthy of divine favor. We are trusting in God's love and in the loving sacrifice of our Redeemer, and this shield can be appreciated and will be thoroughly used only by those who have received of the love of God as well as of a measure of knowledge.

The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, is a part of this armament. But do we not see that many who have the Word of God are holding it by the blade and not by the hilt? Do we not see that a failure to appreciate the love of God has been their difficulty, so that the study of the Word and the knowledge gained respecting the Word have been comparatively valueless to them, misleading—injurious—because they received not the Truth in the love of it. Most evidently some have received the Truth in large measure and some in lesser measure, in proportion as they had the right or the wrong kind of love. Pride and self-love have hindered many from taking the sword of the Spirit in the proper manner; pride and denominational love have hindered others; and we are safe to say that all who handle the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, are in great danger of doing injury to themselves thereby, except as they speak the Truth in love—"In the love of it"—in appreciation of it as God's great revelation of himself and of his purposes. If selfishness to any extent combines with this love, to that extent the sword is dangerous to the one who wields it. Love out of a pure heart is the only proper, the only safe, condition.

The sandals of preparation for contact with the world and the ruggedness of the way are very necessary. Pride and ambition may enable us to pass over a considerable stretch of rough roadway without discouragement, but we may be sure that the Lord has so arranged the narrow way that selfish ambitions will never carry us to the end. On the contrary, the divine order is that only love for the Lord and for his flock and for his Truth will so protect us that we can go onward and upward in the narrow way clear to the end of the journey without discouragement that would turn us aside.

The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad

We are assured that the above words represent the sentiments of a considerable proportion of the readers of this journal. . . . We should all be profited, strengthened by the meat in due season which our present Lord is dispensing to the household of faith as never before. How else could we understand the light that is now shining upon the divine Word? And is not this understanding of the matter in full accord with our Lord's precious promise that at his second coming, when he would make up his jewels, gather his very elect, his Bride, he would first knock? And then to those servants who would open immediately and show their faithfulness, he would come in and sup with them? More than this, he would become their servant and gird himself and bring forth from the storehouse things new and old. (Matt. 13:52.) How wonderfully, how accurately, this matter is being fulfilled before us today! It is the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our sight. The eyes of our understanding discern clearly and we rejoice therein.—Z. '07, 245-247.

We take the opportunity to point out that our trials and testings as spirit-begotten New Creatures in the Truth will surely be on three points:

(1) Faith. (2) Humility. (3) Love.

To fail in any of these will mean disaster. To come off conqueror in all three of them will mean energy and devotion to *know* and *to do* the Father's will. The time is short. The test will be severe. But he who is on our part is greater than all that be against us and ready to render every assistance needful, if our hearts be but loyal along the points mentioned.—Z. '09, 4.

A NOTE OF WARNING.

En route for Gethsemane, Jesus sought to impress upon his disciples the fact that they were entering a great crisis. He quoted to them the prophecy, "I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." (Zechariah 13:7.) He said to them plainly that as a result they would all be offended—discouraged, stumbled, amazed. The thing that they were not expecting would occur.

St. Peter, full of confidence in his own devotion to the Lord, denied this, declaring that it would not be true in his case—that even though it should be true of all the others, he was ready to die with the Master, rather than to deny Him. Jesus still insisted that St. Peter was in great danger. He was trusting too much to his flesh, and not looking to God and prayerfully watching against temptation. Indeed, all the disciples joined in the same remonstrance against the accusation that Jesus had made. They declared themselves loyal and ready for death. How little they knew that severe trials would come upon them!

Surely there is a lesson here for all the followers of Jesus—today as well as then. It is right that we should feel ourselves thoroughly determined to be loyal to the Lord's Cause to our very last breath; for such a determination is very necessary to victory. The mistake made by many is in *not realizing how severe the trials and temptations may become*—in not realizing the necessity of Heavenly assistance in our every time of need. The Apostle wrote, "When I am weak, then am I strong." (2 Cor. 12:10.) By this he doubtless meant, when fully loyal to the Lord, I feel my own weakness and insufficiency, but I am strong because then I rely especially upon Heavenly aid—then I watch and pray, and am thus forewarned against the temptations.

Doubtless in the end of this Age—in the closing days of this Gospel Dispensation—there will come Gethsemane experiences to the Church of Christ. Those who will stand temptations and trials, and come off victorious, will be the ones whose faith and trust in the Lord are strong—those who watch and pray lest they enter into temptation, and who are thus safeguarded against it. As our Lord forewarned St. Peter and the other Apostles of their coming trial, so He has forewarned us of the great crucial test near at hand. Let us profit by the experiences of the Apostles recorded in this lesson.—Z. '14, 299.

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

He depicted a NARROW way leading to life, a way that He Himself opened up and made possible.—Z. '14, 38.

It is too near the end of the race to think of turning back!—Z. '12, 262.

The majority, the Great Company, hold back, fail to appropriate the promises, fail to trust the Lord, and their influence is proportionately an evil one upon others with whom they have influence.—Z. '07, 251.

And we are to *watch*. What should we watch? Preeminently we should watch *ourselves*, to keep ourselves from the snares of the present time.—Z. '15, 55.

The only present reward for which the followers of Christ may look is the heartfelt manifestation of the Lord's love and approval.—Z. '07, 302.

The way to the crown is the way of the cross, the way of sacrifice, as well to every member of the Body of Christ as it was to our Head and Lord, Christ Jesus.—Z. '07, 302.

We do not merely *forsake sin*, but give up that to which we have *a right in earthly interests*.—Z. '13, 75.

He who was with and guided the early Church is with us with equal power. He who guided in that harvest time is guiding now, and will continue to guide his work to the end.—Z. '09, 58.

The Church of Christ now have this promised peace and good will. It is granted only to those who have come into vital relationship with God through Christ—the fully consecrated ones.—Z. '14, 343.

Many are the peculiar subterfuges which the fallen nature will use, in its attempt to stifle the voice of conscience.—Z. '10, 340.

Those who lag behind and are careless of their consecration vows will nevertheless be finally put to the test. Matters will so NARROW down with them that they will be obliged to determine whether they will prove their loyalty to God or not.—Z. '14, 39.

The Great Company class are loyal in heart or they would not be in that class. But they are willing to *compromise;* and because of this willingness to do so, they weaken their character. In order to be *overcomers* they must develop this element of character at any cost.—Z. '12, 389.

We perceive that *the few* who have come into covenant relationship with the Lord are the only ones who are standing. But many even of these, because of having been overcharged with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches, and false teachings, are in a trembling condition and are quite unable to stand firmly.—Z. '15, 375.

We cannot expect to abide in the Lord's love and be careless of his injunctions. The measure of our faithfulness to him will be indicated by our obedience to him, as the measure of his love for the Father was indicated by his obedience to the Father.—Z. '05, 124.

The Lord is watching our course continually. His eye is ever upon us to see to what extent we are zealous in crucifying our flesh. Those who are in dead earnest in this matter are the ones whom He is seeking. He seeks a godly seed—those who have the disposition of the Master; and the Master's disposition has ever been in direct antagonism to everything sinful.—Z. '15, 148.

That the Lord does take an active part in the affairs of the Church we truly believe. St. Paul says that "God hath set the members, every one of them, in the Body as it hath pleased Him." (I Corinthians 12:18.) This surely indicates a Divine supervision in the Church.—Z. '15, 186.

Only by permitting false teachers could He demonstrate to Himself and to the angels to what extent His professed people are loyal to Him, and whether they will follow false doctrines and false teachers. The Lord will have only those to be of the Very Elect who will obey Him and will trust Him even where they cannot trace Him; so long as they have His Word, His Testimony, it should be sufficient.—Z. '15, 341.

Whoever takes a vow should remember that it were better not to take it at all than to violate it; for its violation serves to weaken the conscience, whereas its observance tends to strengthen the entire life and to make the individual the more fit, the more prepared, for the Lord's service here and hereafter. The Lord seeks amongst His people strong characters for efficient service.—Z. '15, 22.

Whoever thinks to himself, "Sometime the Kingdom is coming, sometime the Time of Trouble will overtake the present order of things: but meantime we will enjoy the things of this world," will not be living up to his privileges, and will be very likely to be taken unawares as by a "thief in the night"; for he is not living in proper relationship with the Lord, and he will be likely to find when too late that he has lost the "prize."—Z. '15, 228.

We wonder in amazement at the magnitude of God's goodness to us, who has lifted us up from our low condition and who will exalt to future glories interminable those faithful ones who make sure their calling and election to glory, honor and immortality.—Z. '13, 54.

As the Saviour said, perplexities are causing the hearts of men to fail for fear and for looking after the things coming upon the world, still future, but because of the sealing in our foreheads—the clear intellectual knowledge—the servants of God may, as Jesus suggested, be lifting up their heads and rejoicing, realizing from present developments that their deliverance draweth nigh.—Z. '15, 196.

In the difficult course before us, and in view of all the dangers that beset us, the pitfalls laid for our feet, the weakness of our own unaided efforts, how blessed is the promise of our Father in Heaven to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him; how precious the assurance that if we are filled with the Spirit we shall not fulfill the desires of the flesh, but shall be enabled to mortify the deeds of the body that we may live! How necessary it is to live very near to the Fountain of all grace, to pray without ceasing and to watch with perseverance!—Z. '15, 358.

INTERESTING LETTERS

To Standfast Bible Students, in Convention Assembled at Portland, Oregon.

Dear Companions and Precious in God's Sight: Most Fervent Greetings!

Truly the blessing of the Lord maketh rich. That blessing at present is a clear vision of the somewhat tragic conditions which prevail not only in the world but particularly amongst the brethren. I would be sad because of the estrangement, were it not for my implicit confidence that the Great Judge is doing the separating through test and trial and is supervising His work in a manner far superior to anything that we could accomplish relative to the church this side the second veil.

Our loving Master said: "I have praved for thee" and "Pray for one another." Some of you, if not all, have prayed for me and with tears of joy now flowing I will say, our Father hears prayer. So far as I know, I am the only one taking this stand here, aside from my loving helpmate, who also has arrived at these same conclusions.

An atmosphere of indefiniteness pervades the minds of those who compromised or otherwise tendered sympathy and association with that which is condemned. At first I took my stand, but later compromised somewhat because of the Tower articles and advice (publicly) by the Society's representative. I have with much penitence asked our strong and ever merciful Father to forgive. Now I have the greatest confidence and the happiest living faith it has been mine to enjoy.

Many have been my privileges, and I have been happy in doing all I could to keep bright the shield of faith amongst our Brethren. I now see those of the "liberal view" appear to have somewhat lost their bearings. I love them all. Elijah is being most completely separated from Elisha by the chariot. His mantle is falling to Elisha, who will smite Jordan the second time when the whirlwind will have taken Elijah beyond.

"Old Corn Gems," stenographic reports of lectures and also a personal letter from our dear Brother ———, have assisted me to a point of intelligent sympathy with you. I am determined to co-operate with you in any way our Lord may direct in comforting and sustaining the little company now sealed and expectant as we stand fast and witness the approach of the whirlwind.

I note the characteristics of Elijah in not urging Elisha to follow him. But let us deal tenderly and speak with no harshness. May a great measure of our Father's Holy Spirit be your portion henceforth.

Humbly and faithfully yours,
A. W. Bailey, Mo.

Dear Brethren:

Greetings in the name of our dear Lord.

With hearts overflowing with gratitude to our dear heavenly Father for the privileges and blessings received at the Washington, D. C., Convention, we wish to thank you for the further favor we have enjoyed in the visit of dear Brother Yerex. Oh, we had such a feast of spiritual food and were never before so happy.

We have had no thought of turning back, and now that we have been strengthened and comforted on the way and better enabled to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, we go on rejoicing and with amazement and delight we behold our Father's wonderful provision for us. (2 Ti. 2:3.)

How lurid many prophesies and types now appear! We now understand why there has been so much confusion and perplexitiy among the I. B. S. A. workers since Memorial, 1918. How glad we are that to us the mists have rolled away!

We would be very glad and thankful to have another Pilgrim Comforter visit us.

Trusting that the Lord will bless you in the present work of helping others of the body of Christ to stand and with much Christian love.

Staunton Ecclesia, Va.

Dear Brother:

Greetings in His dear name!

This is a very late day for me to write and tell you how I appreciate the Corn Gems. Will you please continue to send them to me? At first I did not think them necessary because of having been fed with the finest of the wheat, but the more I see of the effect of the Corn Gems, the joy and strength the dear saints derive, the more I am convinced that I need the same food, too. The time is short now. Corn is surely the best to give strength and put on the final touches quickly.

I want to tell you of two dear saints who have gained a renewal of strength from the visits of the Gems—Brother and Sister ———. They are standing strongly now, knowing what this separation means. This past year has been like a dreadful nightmare. They knew there was confusion in the classes but did not know where they belonged, so they waited and the Lord sent them help in time of need. They want me to express their joy and thanks to you, but I cannot. Words fail.

The Gems are finding their way to all the hungry, homesick ones everywhere. How good to know "the Lord knoweth them that are His." He has promised to supply all their need and His promises are sure. I was reading in the first number of the Gems today: "To the faithful in Christ, the loyal saints of God, this little paper goes with our earnest prayers that it may be blest of Him." It truly has been blest by Him and is being used by Him in gathering and comforting the bewildered and scattered sheep everywhere.

May the Lord's richest blessing continue with all the dear comforters and helpers until the work is done and all are gathered safely Home, there to abide in His presence forevermore. Pray for me.

Your sister by His grace, A. W., Wis.

Dear Brother:

Greetings in His dear name!

I just learned this evening of the convention by a delayed letter. If I had known of it I would surely have been there.

Have had no opportunity of fellowship with the friends for weeks and the last place I was (Pendleton) I didn't have the fellowship my heart yearned for. I have just moved here—out in the country, ten miles southwest of Monroe. Can you put me in touch with any friends near? I think there is a class at Eugene, if I could only get in touch with them.

From what I can find out about these "Standfast" friends, I think they are my kind. The Lord's kind if my kind. On the questions of ——— and ——— I have stood firm, not supporting either. If you can put me in touch with some of the friends I would be so glad.

I got your name, dear brother, from the convention announcement sent to me from a sister at Neosho, Mo. That is my home, or was till last October, when I moved West.

Sister McLain (my wife) is also consecrated. She and I will celebrate Passover here alone, if I cannot meet with others.

I trust our Home gathering is near, when we can meet our precious Saviour and also our loving pastor, who so faithfully served us. I get so anxious I can hardly wait. Yes, I know it means death to the flesh and perhaps a violent death, but that has no terror to those who long to be with their Lord. How good and patient He is with us! Oh, to be like Him! Can it be soon?

With much love to you all,

(Signed) J. W. McLain, Monroe, Ore.

Dear Brother in Christ:

We have attended that wonderful little convention in Chicago and as a result have become very much interested in this work. We are convinced that our dear Lord is heading this movement in the interest of His dear little ones, for the perfecting and comforting of the saints. How graciously our dear Heavenly Father has provided for them that are His, by sending forth these wonderful little "Gems," prepared by "that Faithful Servant," in the light of which we may be enabled to stand in this evil day.

May the Lord richly bless you and all the dear co-laborers, is our prayer.

Your sister in Christ, E. F. W., Ill.

Dear Brother:

Greetings and sincere love to your dear loyal heart! May grace, mercy and peace from our dear Heavenly Father and His glorious Son be with you and all the dear staff at Portland.

I would like to say that I am just delighted with the "Old Corn Gems," for they are indeed real gems to my hungry soul. They are so satisfying and fill a place that nothing else could. Just send one copy instead of two. Possibly you have my name on two lists.

Do not bother to reply; you are too busy. Just send "Old Corn Gems along.

Your brother in Christ, G. H. H., Can.

STAND FAST PRINCIPLES

The Great Master warned that, straight is the gate and narrow the way that leads unto life and that few would ever find it; and experience shows that fewer are disposed to walk therein after they do find it, for it is too narrow—it is the way of self-denial and SELF-SACRIFICE. It is the way our Lord walked in loneliness; and we are called to walk in His footsteps. No one can "STAND FAST" without so doing.

PRINCIPLE is defined as a "fixed rule of action." "STAND FAST BIBLE STUDENTS" therefore are "firm, unmovable, knowing that their toil is not unfruitful in the Lord." These prayerfully and conscientiously observe the Principles laid down by our Lord and confirmed by His Apostles. Their teachings form the "rule of action" of their daily lives. From these they steadfastly refuse to turn, come what may, ever bearing in mind that ONE is their Master and Him they would obey, whatever the cost. They know no other Master and use only the Liberty that comes from Him, their Head. Observance of such Principles of necessity leads to carefulness of conduct and to examination of motives, which are the mainspring of actions.

Therefore the teachings of the Lord and His Apostles, the CHANNEL of all Divine Truth, become their inspiration, their comfort and the source of their strength and consolation. Likewise all those of the "NARROW WAY" are careful to note and follow the precepts and practices of "THAT FAITHFUL SERVANT." Upon these they place consistent construction, and from the same they will not deflect; though others waver, they will not, they Stand Fast, but never use their liberty for a cloak.

Knowing their God, "Stand Fast Bible Students" consequently honor their Head by hearty obedience to His commandments. They would lift the "Royal Banner" high, that the poor world, through their lives, their courage and their loyalty, MIGHT SEE their Lord and Saviour.

The Principles for which these are so resolutely standing, are those set forth in the Scriptures, and so fearlessly, vigorously and uniformly advocated by "That Faithful Servant," and until the summer of 1918 were held to by all the adherents of the I. B. S. A.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER NINE

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TRUTH SUPPRESSED - - ELECT FOUND - - DOOR SHUT

All who are dissenters from the Church confederation will come under the ban and under the pressure, with a realization that liberty of thought on religious subjects has much to do with all liberty and with the thought that the repression of liberty must mean the suppression of all religious teaching along independent lines, or, as we say, along Scriptural lines. When that hour shall come—probably within eight years—it will surely mean the suppression of ZION'S WATCH TOWER and all propaganda of the Truth.

We may expect that by that time all of the "elect" will have been found, and we will incline to expect such a suppression as corresponding to the point marked by our Lord's parable when the "door was shut"—that no more might go in to the wedding. (Matt. 25:10.) So far as we are concerned, these restrictions and suppressions must not move us to an abandonment in any degree of the wisdom that cometh from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, easy of entreatment and full of mercy and good fruits.

Instead of feeling even angry with those who would use restraint, we must be prepared to regard their course as our Lord regarded the course of those who suppressed him, and his answer to Pilate *must satisfy us.* His words were, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above." (John 19:11.) *If the power for suppression is given by our Lord it will mean to us the good tidings that the Kingdom is very near at hand, and all the more we will lift up our heads and rejoice, knowing our deliverance is at hand.*—Z. '05, 100.

Resolution Passed at the Victoria Stand Fast Convention

Victoria, B. C., April 20, 1919.

Whereas, We believe that the Harvest is ended, and that all the saints are sealed and that the Door to the High Calling is closed;

Be It Resolved, therefore, by this Convention assembled, that the need for public work has passed, as that was for the purpose of finding the True Wheat of the Gospel Age which has now been garnered;

Further, That the discourses given at our Sunday meetings should be adapted to the saints; the meek of the earth, should any be present, would receive greater benefit therefrom, than from any so-called public talks;

Further, That any public advertisement should be reduced to an announcement of place of meeting and time of same, no reference to name of speaker or subject being made.

PROPOSED ROUTE OF COMFORTER BROTHERS HADLEY, YEREX AND PALMER.

Minneapolis, Minn.	May 4 and 5
Estherville, Iowa	May 6
Lenora, Kansas	May 7 to 9
Kiowa, Kansas	May 10 to 11
Alva, Oklahoma	May 16 to 18
Oklahoma City, Okla.	May 20 to 22
Dallas, Texas	May 23 to 25
Jacksonville, Fla. (Two Comforters)	Date announced later
Neosho, or Kansas City, Mo. (One Brother)	Date announced later
Chicago, Ill. (Two Brothers)	Date announced later
Washington, D. C. (One Brother)	Date announced later
Milwaukee, Wis.	Date announced later

Brother F. M. Campbell, of Minneapolis, is also with these Brethren, and many points not mentioned above will be reached D. V.

Published by the Stand Fast Bible Students, under the supervision of members of a committee of seven. F. McKercher, Chairman, Box 939, Portland, Oregon.

The Patience of the Saints

Repeatedly Brother Russell warned the Church, that having attained unto the fourth quarter mark of love, having done all, and while Standing Fast clad in the full armor of a Soldier of the Cross, then the Final Test would come, the test of patient, cheerful endurance.

Stand Fast Bible Students recognize that that time is now here and with it has come the great test, the Final Test, "For the great day of his wrath is come; *and who shall be able to stand?*" (Rev. 6:17.) He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity (but is meek, humble and sincere), nor sworn deceitfully (but has made a solemn covenant of consecration with the Lord and will NOT despise or ignore it).—Psa. 24.4.

We quote from C. 211, 212:

Observe that, when this night cometh, when the reapers *must* cease their labors, it will prove that this final work of the Gospel age is accomplished; that the elect number of the Bride of Christ have all been "sealed," and "gathered" into a condition of separateness from the worldly—into the barn condition (Matt. 13.30); for *God will not permit anything to put an end to his work until it is finished.* Then, all the true and faithful servants of God will have been sealed in their foreheads; and, the work of the Gospel age being finished, no more can enter into that work or reap its rich reward, foretold in the "exceeding great and precious promises" as the reward of the faithful who enter while the "door is open."—2 Peter 1:4.

But we are not to gather from this that all, as quickly as proved faithful, will at once enter into their reward. . . . "Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Having put on the whole armor of God, and boldly withstood error by clear and fearless presentation and defense of the truth, during this evil day, when giant errors so boldly and defiantly stalk abroad, the saints are exhorted, "Having done all, to stand," clad in full armor, with the sword of the spirit ever ready for defense, and with watchfulness and perseverance and prayer for all saints. All will have need of patience, that after having done the will of God they may receive the promise.—Rev. 14:12; Eph. 6:13; Heb. 10:36. C. 211, 212.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER NINE

"They did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover—and the manna ceased—neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit (OLD CORN) of the land of Canaan (during) that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL. Z. '18:51.

What Brother Russell Said About

"THE FINAL TEST"

PATIENT ENDURANCE THE FINAL TEST

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."—James 1:4.

The Scriptures everywhere represent patience as an important element of character. In every phase of human experience we can see its need. To be just, under present conditions, one must be patient, not rash; for it would be unjust to be impatient and severe with the unavoidable imperfections and weaknesses of our fellow-men. Therefore the spirit of a sound mind demands that we be patient in dealing with fallen humanity. God Himself possesses this quality of patience, and has long exercised it. In dealing with the world in the next Age the Church will need to have much patience, and under our present environments we need it constantly in order to develop the character necessary for a place on the Throne with our Lord. . . .

THE PATIENCE OF GOD.

As the quality of justice will always persist, so will the quality of patience, though not in the sense of patient endurance of evil. God patiently works out His own glorious designs, in perfect equipoise of mind. At present this requires the exercise of patient endurance with evil, sinful conditions; and in the Ages of glory to come God will, we believe, still work out His purposes in perfect patience, probably in worlds yet uninhabited.

But in the exercise of patience under present evil conditions, Wisdom must have a voice. God has declared that in His Wisdom the time will come when He will cease to exercise patience toward the world. That is to say, He will no longer bear with the world in their present sinful, imperfect condition. That time has almost arrived. The great cataclysm of trouble, now about due, will sweep away the entire present order preparatory to the establishment of the Kingdom of God under the whole heavens. Then God will give men the fullest opportunity of coming into harmony with Himself and righteousness before He will deal with them summarily.

The time is coming when there will be no more sin. God will have a clean universe by and by. But He will first give everybody an opportunity to rise out of sin. If they will not avail themselves of the opportunity, then God's patience, longsuffering, will cease to be operative toward such. This will not mean that God's patience has ceased, but that its activity has ceased in that direction.

God's patience has arranged the thousand years of Messiah's Reign for man's blessing, and His Wisdom has decided that those thousand years will be sufficient for the elimination of evil. Whoever will not learn to live righteously under those favorable conditions would never learn, and it would not be the part of Divine Wisdom longer to exercise patience with such. Likewise also, in our dealings with ourselves and others, there is a limit to the proper exercise of patience—longsuffering. We should not be patient with ourselves beyond a certain point. There are circumstances in which we would properly feel that we should have *known* better and should have *done* better than than we did.

LET US JUDGE OURSELVES.

If a child of God realizes that he has been derelict with himself, he should say, I will not be patient with myself any further. I will take myself in hand and conquer this weakness which I have permitted in a measure to assert itself to the weakening of my own character and probably to the discomfort and pain of others. I cannot do this in my own unaided strength, but by the grace of the Lord I am determined to overcome in this matter. . . .

OUR LORD'S LESSONS ON PATIENT ENDURANCE.

Recurring to the word patience as used in our text, let us glance backward to our Lord's Parable of the Sower, as recorded in Luke 8. In verse 15 we read "That on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the Word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience," patient endurance, constancy.

The thought here is that to be of the fruit-bearing class which the Lord will approve and accept in His Kingdom we must do more than to receive the Word of His Testimony, even though we receive it with joy. It means more; for the stony ground class at first thus received it. For a brief time these seemed to give evidence of fruitfulness and vigor; but when the hot sun of persecution arose, they withered away, because of lack of depth of soil.

In this parable the Lord shows that patient endurance, constancy, is the final test of character. It follows after the receiving and the sprouting of the seed; it follows after love, hope, joy and faith have caused the seed to spring forth and begin to bear fruit. Patient endurance, then, is necessary in order that the fruit may be developed and thoroughly ripened, that the grain may be made ready for the garner. Ah, how important this grace is seen to be, in the light of God's Word! But remember that the endurance must be *cheerful*. We cannot suppose that of severe testing. The whole course of the world will be He who judges the thoughts and intents of the heart would be pleased with His children, even when He saw them bearing much for His sake, if they endured it in an impatient or dissatisfied or unhappy frame of mind.

Those who thus endure surely would not be copies of God's dear Son, whose sentiment found expression in the words, "I *delight* to do Thy will, O My God!" All of the Royal Priesthood are sacrificers, as was our great Chief Priest; and God, who accepts our sacrifices through the merit of our dear Redeemer, informs us that He loves a *cheerful* giver—one who performs his sacrifices gladly, with a willing heart. This does not mean that our bodies will never grow weary; but that our spirit will rejoice in the privilege of suffering weariness of the flesh in so noble and wonderful a service. But if our Father should see best to lay us aside from active work for a time, when our hearts are longing to serve, this too will be an opportunity to endure cheerfully His will for us. It may also be a test of our full submission of our wills to His, and thus be an important stepping-stone upward toward the Kingdom glories and privileges.

The other instance in which the Lord used this word patience, or patient endurance, is recorded in Luke 21:19. He had just been telling His followers that they must expect tribulations as the result of being His disciples during the present time, when sin abounds, when Satan is the prince of this world. They must expect opposition from various quarters; but He assured them that nevertheless they would be fully under Divine care and protection, even though persecutions would be permitted to reach and *to affect them. Then follow the words, "In* your patience (patient endurance, cheerful constancy) possess ye your souls."—Luke 21:19.

Our faith and our trust in the Lord and His gracious promises should be so strong and unwavering that they will far more than counterbalance the oppositions of the world, of false brethren, and of Satan's blinded servants. So implicit should be our faith in our Father's love and care that all these persecutions will be recognized and rejoiced in as the agencies of His providence in chiseling, shaping and polishing us as living stones for the glorious Temple which He is constructing, and which is now so soon we believe to be set up.

Viewing our trials from this standpoint, we can indeed rejoice and can possess our souls, our lives, as New Creatures, even amidst tribulations, with cheerful endurance. Yea, we may realize that the soul, the real being, to whom God has given the "exceeding great and precious promises" of the future, cannot be injured by the persecutions of the flesh, or by anything that man can do unto us, so long as we are faithful to the Lord, accepting every experience that He permits to come to us as ministrations of His providence for our ultimate good and His glory.

THE NECESSITY FOR PATIENT ENDURANCE.

Let us here examine carefully into the reason why it is necessary for us to develop this grace of patient endurance. It appears that the development of this quality is one of the conditions which God has attached to the call to joint-heirship with our Lord in the Kingdom, and one of the same conditions required of Him. The wisdom of this is manifest when we consider the work to which we are called—the work of blessing all the families of the earth, as God's Millennial Kingdom, in joint-heirship with the Only Begotten Son of God, our great Redeemer. That will be a mighty work; and it is eminently proper that Jehovah should require that those whom He shall account worthy of that exalted position shall not only appreciate His goodness and His glorious character, and prefer His service to sin and iniquity, but demonstrate their thorough loyalty to the principles of righteousness and to His will to the extent of a joyful willingness to suffer on behalf of these principles. A transitory endurance of one or two or three brief trials would not prove the individual to have an established character for righteousness; but a patient, cheerful, endurance even unto death would be necessary to demonstrate such a character.

We might illustrate this with the diamond. Suppose that we are able to make diamonds out of some plastic material with the brilliancy of the real diamond; and suppose that they became hard, but not so hard as the genuine diamond. Would these imitation diamonds have the value of the true diamond? By no means. If they were subjected to severe pressure, they would be crushed. And so with the Christian. If we supposed him possessed of every grace of character that could belong to the sons of God, save this one of firmness *(standfastness)* endurance, he would not be fit to be amongst the Lord's jewels. Hence we see the necessity of the Lord's demand that patient, cheerful endurance shall be a characteristic of each one who shall be accepted to a place in His Royal Diadem. . . .

TRIALS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL.

Our ability and strength to patiently endure should increase as we progress in the narrow way. We should grow "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." But we cannot possibly develop this essential trait of character without trials—experiences intended to call for *the exercise of cheerful endurance. So let us not think* it strange if we are called upon to pass through protracted trials which make necessary the nerving of ourselves to *bear*. But let us repeat that the virtue is not merely in the bearing; for the *world* has much to bear, but it is particularly in the *manner* in which we endure. At heart we must be sweet and submissive—in fullest harmony with the Lord's processes of development. This may be hard at times; but His grace will be sufficient, if we constantly apply for it. "Having done all," let us "stand."

Ah, yes! We can see a new reason for the Lord's arrangement that we should have our trial as our Master had His—under an evil environment—that we might not only have all the necessary qualities of Christian character, but have them rooted, grounded, fixed, established.

The Apostle James likewise draws our attention to the importance of this quality. He says, "The trying of your faith worketh patience"; that is to say, if our faith stands the trial, it will work out in our character this patient endurance. On the other hand, if we do not attain this development, it will mean that our faith has not stood the test satisfactorily, and that we are not fit for the Kingdom. Thus we see clearly what a great mistake has been made among Christian people in general in supposing that religion is a thing to be gotten suddenly as an answer to prayer, or by going to the mourner's bench, or by standing up for prayers, or in response to some Divine or human appeal—just as one would get a dollar and put it into his pocket. On the contrary, the step of repentance from sin and justification is only the beginning, and not the end, of the Christian way. The next step is consecration of ourselves and our all to God. But this also is far from the end. Not only must we go on and on, to the attainment of faith, fortitude, self-control, meekness and love, but having attained all these, we must *patiently endure*. We must "run with patience (cheerful endurance) the race set before us." Or, to use another figure of speech, it is merely starting in the School of Christ; merely having our names enrolled as pupils, to be taught of the Lord.

"THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION."

The Church of the Philadelphia period were promised of the Lord that because of their faithfulness, because they had "kept the Word of My patience," they should be kept from "the hour of temptation" which was to come upon all the world a little later. The Church of Laodicea—the Church of our day—is not kept from entering into the "hour of temptation"; but we may be sure that we will be kept while *in* it, if we are faithful and true. Our dear Lord's special message to the Laodicean phase of the Church has been, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear My Voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me. To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne."—Revelation 3:20, 21.

Though we are not spared from this hour of temptation, we have a counterbalancing blessing as a result of living in the time of our Lord's parousia. We may have His instruction, His dispensing to us of spiritual food, "meat in due season," in a manner and to a degree never before enjoyed by His saints. And, as we might expect, this greatest favor is offset by the subtle and severe trials and testings of this special "hour of temptation." If there was ever a time when patient endurance was needed by the Lord's faithful, it is *now*. If ever they needed the counsel, "In your *patience* possess ye your souls," they need it *now*. Those who are able to *patiently endure* will *stand* in this evil day. ALL OTHERS WILL FALL. As the Apostle forewarned us, the fiery ordeals of this day "will try every man's work, of what sort it is."

We find this quality of patient endurance lacking everywhere throughout Christendom today, even among the majority of the professed followers of Christ. It is becoming *more* and *more* scarce. Few wish to endure anything—for righteousness' sake, for Christ's sake, or for anyone else's sake; and if endurance of anything unpleasant is absolutely necessary, the trial is borne with much of impatience, complaint and chafing. Moreover, a spirit of defiance and rebellion against everything like self-denial or resignation, a spirit of intense bitterness, is daily growing in the hearts of mankind.

This general tendency of the civilized world today toward non-endurance, impatience and rebellion against restraint necessarily has its influence upon those who are seeking to walk in the narrow way. Only by Divine grace can this tendency be successfully resisted, and progress be made toward the development of the likeness of Christ. This special grace, needed today by the Lord's Children, will be withheld from those who are not walking close to the Lord, following in the footsteps of Jesus. *It is because the professed followers of Christ are living so far from Him that we see today the tendencies are developing which we have noted amongst those who profess His name*. . . .

The Apostle counsels us respecting this "hour of temptation" which is now upon us. Its besetments and trials will be many, and *some of them will be so subtle and deceptive that ALL who are not thoroughly rooted and grounded in the Truth will be carried away by the false arguments* of those whom Satan is now permitting to use as his agents in trying all those who dwell upon the face of the whole earth. . . .

ST. PAUL'S PICTURE OF PRESENT CONDITIONS.

The hour of trial is not coming alike upon all, for all of Christendom are not upon the same plane—mentally, morally or physically. The trial as it is coming upon Christendom in general, however, is pictured by the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 3: 1-5. He here enumerates certain characteristics of this "hour of temptation." He says, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves—covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers (enticers to strife), incontinent (not under restraint, impetuous), fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors (those who cannot be trusted, would sell out their best friends for selfish considerations), heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a *form* of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

This is a graphic picture of present-day conditions in the Christian world, so-called. Because they received not the Truth in the love of it, therefore God has sent them "strong delusions, that they should believe a lie," and should be condemned thereby. This hour of temptation has not yet reached its greatest intensity, but we believe this stage will be reached in a very short time. Blessed are all they who have made the Lord, "even the most High, their Habitation." These shall not be moved; yet many of them will pass through most severe trials and temptations. Through the mails we learn of the struggles and prayers of many of God's children—some because of their own imperfections and frailties, and some because of the imperfections of others; and still others are tried because of earthly cares and burdens which they seem unable to fully overcome or to cast upon the Lord.

LET US HAVE THE PROPER FEAR.

We sympathize with these dear ones, and counsel them as best we can, remembering the Master's words, "Blessed are ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh." (Luke 6:21.) Our heart is especially solicitous for those whose letters give evidence that they are in temptation, but realize it not—who are being swallowed up of ambition or business or other "cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches" —whose love for the Truth seems to be growing cooler instead of hotter and who seem to *feel* less and *see* less than they did years ago. These seem to be sleeping when they should be watching and praying; and this hour of trial, we fear, is finding them unprepared; while some who are weeping, praying and striving are more like our dear Master in Gethsemane; and, like Him, they will be strengthened for the final trial.

Let us each, dear brethren, be very solicitous for ourselves and for each other, and, counting the prize held out to us as far dearer and more precious than all else beside, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left to us of entering into His rest, any of us should seem to come short of it." Let us so love all the Lord's dear children that their welfare will be our chief concern; and this will mean our own spiritual health. *Yet we must not allow our love even for the brethren hinder our fullest confidence in the Lord's love and wisdom in the choice of His Bride, even though siftings should take from us some whose fellowship we have cherished.*

Let us patiently hold on our way—this blessed way! Let us do with our might what our hands find to do. Soon will come the Harvest Home! Soon, if faithful, we shall gather, as a glorious company, to go out no more forever. We shall come with rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us! But let us remember that "We have need of *patience,* that after we have done the will of God, we might receive the promise!"—Hebrews 10:36. Z. '15, 83-87.

"YE HAVE NEED OF PATIENCE"

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect, and entire, wanting nothing."—Jas. 1:4.

There are two quite distinct words in the Greek which, in our English Scriptures are translated "patience." One of these is a word that in a general way corresponds to the common thought of patience as we speak of it in connection with the everyday affairs of life, meaning merely forbearance, or long-suffering. Indeed, the Greek word is generally translated long-suffering. It is the other word with which we are more particularly interested in the treatment of our text, and which is the one most frequently translated patience by the New Testament writers.

This word has a much deeper and fuller significance than attaches to our English word patience. It signifies, rather, constancy, the thought being an endurance of evil in a cheerful, hopeful, willing, patient manner It represents, therefore, an element of character, and not merely a temporary condition or restraint of feeling or action. It signifies that development of heart and character which manifests itself in an endurance of wrong or affliction with contentment, without rebellion of will, with full acquiescence in the Divine Wisdom and Love, which, while permitting present evils, has promised to overthrow them in God's due time.

This grace of patience smooths the way for every other Christian grace, because all must be acquired under the process of patience and continuous self-discipline. Not a step of progress can be gained without this grace of patience; and not one of the graces more beautifully adorns the Christian character, or wins the approval of the world's conscience, or glorifies the God of all grace whose Truth inspires it. It is *enduring meekness,* striving to stem the tide of human weakness, and endeavoring with painstaking care to attain to the Divine likeness. It is slow to wrath and plenteous in mercy; it is quick to perceive the paths of righteousness and prompt to walk in them; it is mindful of its own imperfections and sympathetic with the imperfections and shortcomings of others.

The importance of endurance in the Christian's character is fully borne out by the Apostle Paul's use of the word; for on more than one occasion he places *patience* above and beyond *love,* which we have seen is the "mark" of character for which we are to run—the *"mark for the prize."* For instance, in writing to Titus (2:2), enumerating the characteristics of the advanced Christian, the Apostle uses the following order: "Vigilant, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity (love), in *patience."* Though we have all the other qualities, this *final test* of *patient, cheerful endurance* must be placed before we can be accepted of the Lord as members of the *very elect.*

Again, in writing to Timothy (2 Tim. 3:10) respecting himself, the Apostle puts this quality of *patient endurance* in the place beyond *love,* saying, "Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, *patient endurance."*

"THE LORD YOUR GOD DOTH PROVE YOU."

One might ask, if "Love is the fulfilling of the Law," and "the mark for the prize of our high calling," how can patience rank higher than Love? The answer is that patient endurance does not come in merely at the close of our race, but it is a requisite all the way, along the race-course. We need this *cheerful endurance* of the *earliest trials* in the Christian way; and as we speed along in our race for the "mark" the spirit of *cheerful endurance* should be *growing stronger and stronger at every step of the journey.* Some might be faithful for a few days or a few months or a few years, yet be unworthy of the great Kingdom blessing of Christ. . . .

When we have reached this mark of the race where we love, not only our *friends,* but our *enemies,* it is required of us that we *stand up to the mark faithfully, cheerfully, patiently enduring the tests* which the Lord will even then see fit to have come upon us. God subjects His people to testing, *long testing,* sometimes for months and years. As it is said, "The Lord your God *proveth you."*—Deut. 13:3.

Hence it is that the Apostle Paul exhorts us, "Having done all, *stand"—endure.* Having reached the "mark," "Let *patient endurance* have her perfect work," or *"perfect her work."* Let *patient endurance* demonstrate, not only that you have the character, the qualifications of love, demanded in the race for the prize, but also that you have love as an *element of character, deep-rooted, immutable,* so that you can *endure opposition cheerfully.*

St. Paul tells us that we have need of this *patient endurance* that, after having done the will of God (after having brought our own will into complete subjection to the Divine will), we might receive the promise. (Heb. 10:36.) The thought in the Apostle's mind seems to be that there is a certain work for us all *to do in ourselves,* "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." (Phil. 2:12, 13.) It is God who is working in us to *will* and to *do*—to co-operate in this work. Let us make sure that rebellion of any kind in our heart be thoroughly killed, mortified; and that we bring the will into perfect submission to the Divine will, so that we may have *no other will than His.* Even then, after we have overcome to this extent, *we have need of patience.* The Lord will not accept us merely because we are consecrated. He requires that the consecration shall be *proven. To begin* *with,* He accepts the consecration; then He *tests us* to demonstrate to what extent we really love Him. . . .

"HE THAT OVERCOMETH SHALL INHERIT ALL THINGS."

One object of the test of patient endurance is that we may be "strong in the Lord," that we may have the character-likeness of the Lord Jesus—not merely the firmness, but also the gentleness. *All this must be developed before we can receive the things promised,* the things which God has in reservation for those that love Him. (1 Cor. 2:9, 10.) These things are spiritual and might be apprehended by our minds, but could not be comprehended. The promise that we are to be like our Lord includes not only the spiritual and heavenly conditions, to which we shall attain in the First Resurrection, but also the blessing of sharing in the uplifting of the world. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:29.) But to "be Christ's" means, not only that we shall accept Him, join Him and His standards, but also that we shall be good soldiers. Those who would not be good soldiers would not be worthy of being members of the Body of Christ, for such could not be conquerors and "more than conquerors" through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Rom. 8:37.

We already have the "promise," but it has not yet been received in the sense of being fulfilled. The promise is a conditional one. "He that doeth these things shall live by them." (Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5.) So in our Lord's arrangement, the condition of the promise is that we shall abide in His love, His favor. Whoever accepts of Christ's death and trusts in Him and seeks to follow the Divine commandments, walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, will receive the promise, for the promise is made to "*overcome.*" *All* the promises of the Gospel Age are made to the "overcomers." Such shall sit upon the Throne. Such shall become the Bride of Christ. Such shall be joint-heirs with the Redeemer and participate in all His great work as the great Messiah, to bless Israel and through Israel the world of mankind.

By faith, the Church now begins to enjoy this conditional promise, which depends upon their "faithfulness to the end—their *patient endurance.* Such loyal ones have the earnest of the promise and shall be joint-heirs in the Kingdom. All others will be cut off from that membership. "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth (cleanseth, pruneth) it, that it may bring forth more fruit." (John 15:2.) We are on trial; and the trial is to prove our loyalty. If this trial time, or probation, is satisfactory, the membership is made permanent. Those who fail to live up to the conditions are not counted worthy to be members of the Body of Christ and joint-heirs in the Kingdom.

LET US ABIDE IN HIS LOVE.

Who can consider the importance of becoming copies of our blessed Lord and Head without feeling that to attain to this character-likeness will be a life-work! It cannot be accomplished in a day or in a year; but the whole life must be devoted to it; and day by day, if we are faithful, we should realize a measure of growth in grace and of development in Christian character. It is not enough that we know the Truth or that we be content to hold it in unrighteousness. We must see to it that the Truth is having its legitimate and designed affect upon the character. And if the Truth is thus received into good and honest hearts, we shall have the assurance of the Apostle Peter that "we shall never fall," but that in due time we shall be received into the Kingdom. Hence we see the necessity of ever keeping the instructions and precepts of the Lord fresh in our minds, and of drinking deep into their inspiring spirit, although we are already established in the faith. To be established in the faith is one thing; to be established in Christian character and in all the graces of the Spirit is *quite another.*

Beloved, "Let us run with patience (cheerful constancy, patient endurance) the race set before us," in the Gospel. (Heb. 12:1.) As already observed, the race must be run with this constancy if we would reach the "mark" and *AFTER reaching the mark* we can maintain our position only by the grace of constancy, patient endurance, that having *done all, we may STAND.*—Z. '11, 408.

THE TEST OF ENDURANCE

***"Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off."*—1 Kings 20:11.**

The Test of Endurance is certainly one of the severest tests of faithfulness to which the elect Church, the Body of Christ, is subjected. It is the test which gages and registers the strength of every other virtue and grace, and no soldier of the cross will be crowned with the laurels of victory who has not stood this test. The Christian life is a warfare, and the above words of one of the kings of Israel to a boastful enemy of the Lord's people, are applicable, not only to every new recruit in the Lord's army, but, similarly, to all who have not yet finished the good fight of faith.

The first gush of enthusiasm in the Lord's service, much as we may and do appreicate it, may be but the hasty production of the shallow soil of a heart which immediately receives the truth with gladness, but, having no root in itself, endures but for a time, and afterward, when affliction and persecution arise, immediately is offended. (Mark 4:16, 17.) Such characters cannot stand the fiery tests of this "evil day," whereof it is written—"The fire (of that day) shall try every man's work, of what sort it is."—1 Cor. 3:13.

NECESSITY FOR THE WHOLE ARMOR.

Therefore, says the Apostle Peter, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange things happened unto you." (1 Peter 4:12.) All of the elect Church must be so tried; and blessed is he that shall endure unto the end. The sure Word of prophecy points to severe conflicts and great trials in the closing scenes of the Church's history. Elijah, a type of the Body of Christ, finished his earthly career and went up by a whirlwind—strong symbol of storms and great afflictions. John, another type of the Church, was cast into prison and then beheaded. And we are forewarned of the great necessity of the whole armor of God, if we would stand in this "evil day."—STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, SERIES 2, Chap. 8.

It therefore behooves everyone who aspires to the prize of our high calling to brace himself for the severer conflicts and trials of faith and patience that may suddenly and without a moment's warning be sprung upon him. In the battle of this day, as in all other battles, the effort of the Enemy is to surprise and suddenly attack and overwhelm the Lord's people; and the only preparation, therefore, that can be made for such emergencies is constant vigilance and prayer and the putting on of the whole armor of God—the Truth and the spirit of the Truth.

WHICH WAY WILL YOU TURN?

"In your patience possess ye your souls." No other grace will be more needed than this in the fiery ordeals of this "evil day"; for without great patience no man can endure to the end. All along the Christian's pathway, ever and anon, he comes to a new crisis; perhaps these are often seemingly of trivial importance, yet he realizes that they may be turning points in his Christian course. Who has not realized them? There comes a temptation to weariness in well-doing, *together with the suggestion of an easier way;* or there springs up a little root of pride or ambition, with suggestions of ways and means for feeding and gratifying it. Then there comes, by and by, the decisive moment when you MUST choose this course or that; and lo, you have reached a crisis!

Which way will you turn? Most likely you will turn in the direction to which the sentiments you have cultivated have been tending, whether that be the right way or the wrong way. If it be the wrong way, most likely you will be unable to discern it clearly; for your long cultivated sentiments will sway your judgment. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof is the way of death." (Pro. 14:12.) How necessary, therefore, is prayer, that in every crisis we may pass the test successfully! Nor can we safely delay to watch and pray until the crisis is upon us; but such should be our constant attitude.

THOSE WHO OUTRIDE THE TRIALS WILL BE THE OVERCOMERS.

The life of a soldier, ever on the alert and on duty, is by no means an easy life; nor do the Scriptures warrant any such expectation. On the contrary, they say, "Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ"; "Fight the good fight of faith," etc. And yet many Christian people seem to have the very opposite idea. Their ideal Christian life is one without a breeze or a storm; it must be one continuous calm. Such a life was indeed more possible in former days than now, though the world, the flesh and the Devil always have opposed them, and always have had to be resisted by every loyal soldier of the cross. But now the opposition is daily becoming more and more intense; for Satan realizes that his time is short, and he is determined by any and every means to exert his power against the consummation of the Lord's plan for the exaltation of the Church.

Consequently, we have had within this Harvest period many and severe storms of opposition; and still there are doubtless more severe trials to follow. But those who, with overcoming faith, outride them all—who patiently endure, who cultivate the spirit of Christ with its fruits and graces, and *who valiantly fight the good fight of faith, rather than withdraw from the field*—such will be the "overcomers" to whom the laurels of victory will be given when the crowning day has come.—Z. '12, 28.

"HE SHALL GIRD HIMSELF AND SERVE THEM"

Alas! how few realize what a dangerous thing is liberty; how carefully it must be used for our benefit, and how easily it might be misused to our eternal danger. Because God created us free agents; because this is part of his likeness, and because, additionally, ambition must be a part of every progressive individual, therefore this free agency and ambition in conjunction bring us all under tests of character. And the greater our abilities, the more our talents and the wider our influence, the stronger the power of ambition may become. Then comes the test. Will this laudable ambition be subject to the Divine Will thoroughly consecrated to do the Lord's will even unto death?

If our devotion to the Lord be absolute, fully in control of our thoughts and words and doings, our liberty and largest ambition will be rightly directed and eventuate in blessings to ourselves and to others. But if the Divine will be not first and absolutely in control of our wills, the more ambition and the more liberty we have the greater will be our danger. Where the Lord is not reverenced—obeyed with heart, mind, soul and strength—someone else has an influence in our hearts—husband or wife, parents or children, or more than probably, self. *We cannot be overcomers except as our hearts are absolutely loyal to the Lord, with self-will and every other will thoroughly subjected to the Divine will.* This is the lesson of life to those who would come off conquerors. How we rejoice, in every struggle, when finally, by God's grace, we recover balance.

It is not to be wondered at that the more prominent brethren have the more severe trials along this line. Of this condition of things the Apostle forewarns us, saying, Be not many of you teachers, knowing that he who is a teacher will experience the more severe trials. *The deflection of some recognized as teachers will cause special trials to others not teachers, and will prove to what extent they have a personal relationship to the Lord through his Word and through an individual consecration to him and through his instructions by his Word and the prophecies —in the School of Christ. We fear that too many are in an attitude of leaning upon others whose fall might bring them disaster.* It is because we have long recognized this principle that, in our writings, we have presented the Lord's message as his message, and not as our own, giving the chapter and verse for every doctrine.

PUTTING ON THE WHOLE ARMOR.

If any are leaning on anything but the Lord's Word for guidance, to these we say that we have striven to bring all of the members of the Body into direct personal contact with the Head, and while not ignoring the value of books and sermons, we have, nevertheless, urged upon all the necessity of proving, to the extent of their ability, every item of truth which they receive. Notwithstanding this, we fear that many lean upon us and upon others. We fully know that we are in the evil day, and that the armor that the Lord provides is to be put on by each one of his faithful soldiers of the cross. We will use our shield, breastplate, helmet and sword in the defense, as much as possible, of all the Lord's people; but each must see to it that he put on this armament for himself. The great King of the Universe has provided it; the Great Captain of our salvation, Jesus, has invited us to put it on, and we, as corporal, merely call attention to the Captain's order. Whoever is negligent will surely rue it.

The time for adjusting this armor is very short. The battle is on. *Many are falling at our side.* What we do should be done energetically, systematically, thoroughly—at once. It is important that we help others to the extent of our ability, but still more important, according to the Divine Will, that we should take heed to ourselves and make our own calling and election sure. It has been our observation that *some who have come into the Truth quite recently are much more clear in it,* and have the armor better adjusted, and are able to use the Sword of the Spirit better, than some who have been in the Truth for five, ten, and even twenty years. Indeed, it is our observation that some who have been long in the Truth are less skillful today in the use of the armor than they were years ago. Why is this? And what is the remedy? The answer is a simple one, manifest to all.

Divine Providence has furnished the people of God at this time an outline of the Divine Plan and a detail of Bible doctrines such as God's people never before had in their possession. Without claiming any inspiration for these STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, we surely may claim a Divine supervision in respect to the matter which they contain and the time of their presentation. Whoever admits that we are in the harvest time at all—that we have been in it since 1875 (1878)—must acknowledge this also, that the Lord promised that at that time he would cause his people to sit down to a bountiful repast of spiritual food and that he would be their servant and bring forth to them "things new and old." (Luke 12:37.) All who recognize these things must recognize these STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES as being identified with the fulfillment of that promise. . . .

The secret of the clearness and power of some who have come recently into the Truth can be traced to the fact that they have been diligently using these Divinely provided helps for Bible study. On the contrary, *many of those who today are less clear in the Truth than they were years ago owe their loss of spiritual vigor and clear perception of the Truth to the fact that they have neglected this Divine provision for their needs. They have followed the worldly thought—that, having digested what some other man has thought, believed and taught, they should break fresh ground for themselves, in hope of bringing forth still brighter jewels from the Divine Word.* Some of these diggers have searched long and carefully, but have found nothing, brought forth nothing, that has specially sparkled as a gem of Truth for the eyes of the Lord's people. Some of them have sought far and near for other fruits and viands for the table of the Lord's family, but have added little, if anything, to that which the great Provider has set before us of "things new and old." Some of these would-be new dishes, new viands, set before the Church have proven to be unhealthful, indigestible, visionary, and calculated to give a fever, rather than real spiritual strength. (BEWARE OF NEW LIGHT.) . . .

All these things are tests. The sooner we realize this fact, the better for us. We have no fear but that the great Shepherd, now present with his sheep . . . will not suffer the wolves to stampede his flock, nor to devour them. Has he not said, "The Father who gave them to me is greater than all, and none can pluck them out of my Father's hand."

The lesson to us all is, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." Be not heady, high-minded and worldly wise, but humble, teachable, and full of faith in the Divine promises, which are so rapidly fulfilling and culminating in this day of his preparation.—Z. '10, 356, 357.

THE END OF THE AGE A PERILOUS TIME

"In the last days perilous times shall come; men shall be traitors heady . . . lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God."—2 Tim. 3:4.

The expression, "the last days," or the latter days, the closing days, refers, not to the end of the world in the sense that many expect this event, but is a Scriptural designation of the present time, the end of this Age, when the Reign of Righteousness is about to begin. We are glad to be living now in this Harvest time! "The Harvest is the end of the Age." (Matt. 13:39.—Diaglott.) The warning given by the Apostle is that, instead of the world's being Christianized and converted to God at this time, the reverse condition will prevail. It will be a time of great peril—peril to the Lord's people—peril for those who have started out to follow Christ. However, it will not be so much a perilous time for the world.

The only ones who are on trial for life or death are those who have been released from the Adamic condemnation. To these the time described by St. Paul will be one turned aside from the high standard that might have been expected. Men will be traitors. As long as it will be of advantage to them to perform a contract they will do so; when not advantageous they will not fulfill the contract. It will be a time when every man's hand will be lifted against his neighbor. Selfishness will be rampant. Each will do what will be to his own interest, regardless of obligation. There will be manifest headiness and selfishness and self-conceit. Men will be "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." This condition is to be a sign of the end of the Age.

Every thoughtful person must perceive that this condition of things is prevailing now. Whenever a contract is found to be unsatisfactory—whether it be a marriage contract or a business contract—the dissatisfied contractor is liable to break the agreement. This party to the contract then assumes the attitude of one who declares, Force me to keep it if you can. The Lord's people will keep their word and BE FIRM FOR PRINCIPLE and true to their contracts, even when these prove disadvantageous to them. This attitude is pleasing to the Lord.

PREVALENCE OF THESE CONDITIONS UNIVERSAL.

We find headiness of spirit in the world everywhere—a loss of respect for authority. No doubt there has been *too much* respect for authority in the past. Now the pendulum is swinging to the other side, and there is *no* respect for authority. This condition has been brought about by a lack of reverence for God—the inevitable result of loss of faith in the Bible as the Word of God. As people lose faith in the Bible, they lose faith in God, and become more selfish and more self-willed. This condition of affairs has been brought about by false doctrine, error. People think that God is their Adversary, purposing to do them harm.

The Higher Critics have been seeking to put away what they have considered the absurdities of religious thought, and to this end have done away with the Bible. Bible students see that the absurdities have been brought about by the creeds and not by the Bible. But the world, losing confidence in God, are becoming more heady than ever before. Even the reverential fear which once held them is departing, and there is a disposition to doubt everything. People are in the condition of mind where they say "Let us eat, drink and be merry"; nobody knows about the future; the preachers are all confused. Everything has come about by evolutionary processes. Let us enjoy the present. Let pleasure be our aim in life. This would seem to be the attitude of the world. They are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

WORLDLY SPIRIT IN SOME OF THE CONSECRATED.

These conditions of our day make it a perilous time for the Church. Do you ask, Would not the Church, on the contrary, be more than ever led to love God? And would this not guard them and keep them from danger? We answer that some of God's people are becoming more and more immersed in the world. The spirit of the world surges all around them. With great difficulty could these come to realize that the whole world is astray in their ideas and ways. The tendency of all such is to have the mind of the world, even though they be spirit-begotten.

This worldly spirit, the Apostle suggests, would affect the Church to some extent. Consequently some of the Lord's people would thus come into special peril at this time, because of neglecting their covenant with the Lord. Others would remember that covenant, and watch and pray, and so make good progress. Those who are living close to the Lord are, for this reason, developing in mind and heart. BUT THESE ARE FEW.

The Great Company class, while still loving the Lord, are becoming immersed in the spirit of the world. Even those who are living nearest to the Divine standard will be more or less imperiled through this spirit, unless they continue diligent in prayer and the study of God's Word. What we see going on about us seems natural to our minds. The way in which other people spend time and money is a temptation to the Lord's people which must be *steadfastly resisted.*

A SUBTLE TEST.

The Lord's people spend and are being spent in His service—by volunteer work, by attending meetings, by holding meetings and in various ways, according to opportunity. They are living separate from the world—distinct lives, lives of consecration. The world now has an eight-hour day. The Lord's faithful people would, on the contrary, make theirs a sixteen-hour day. But all these present-day conditions constitute perils. *For us to do what others do, and to devote to the Lord's service only what the world considers a reasonable day's work, would not be fulfilling our Covenant of Sacrifice at all.* Those who seek merely to do right, and to put in eight hours or so a day faithfully, after the manner of the world, will be judged from this standpoint; and they will merely obtain a place in the Great Company. They are not fulfilling the conditions of the covenant of sacrifice.

But the Little Flock will serve the Lord with such delight that they will scarcely know how to cease their efforts. They recognize that their bodies are fully consecrated to the Lord, and they are daily putting them to death in a reasonable, rational manner. In view of these perilous times, let us each ask himself the question, *To which class do I belong?*—Z. '14, 70-71.

THE GREATEST EVENT IN HISTORY

"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."—1 Corinthians 15:3.

Calvary was the scene of the most wonderful event of history, the fulcrum as it were upon which divine Love and Justice operated for the rolling away of the curse resting upon humanity. Its site is not definitely known, yet the Latin word Calvary furnishes a clue, being an equivalent to the Hebrew word golgotha and signifying "the place of the skull." There is a bare knoll of a hill, with two caves in the front, which, looked at from a distance has rather the appearance of a skull, the caves and the brush growing therein representing the eye sockets. It is presumed that this was the place of the crucifixion. The same custom of describing rocks and hills by things which they somewhat resemble still prevails. Thus we have Sentinel Dome and Bridal Veil Falls in the Yosemite, Pulpit Rock and Teakettle Rock in the Rocky Mountains, the Owl's Head in the White Mountains and Caesar's Head in the Blue Ridge.

Crucifixion is a most horrible and torturous form of death, yet it was not the torture of death which our Redeemer suffered on our behalf which so much gives us a feeling of sympathy and sorrow as our minds go back to Calvary and the scenes preceding it. Two others were crucified with Jesus; many others had suffered a similar death before and since, and some, we may presume, suffered as much or more agony through longer drawn-out torture, gradual burning at the stake, lacerations, etc. The thought which impresses our hearts most deeply is that our dear Saviour's experiences not only were undeserved, unmerited by the one "who went about doing good," but that his experiences were in connection with the payment of our penalty, so that "by his stripes we are healed."—Isa. 53:5.

"THE LOVE OF CHRIST CONSTRAINETH US."

The thought that Christ died for our sins, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God—that we might be restored to divine favor, released from the just curse or sentence of death which was upon us—this thought moves our hearts to loving sympathy. "The love of Christ constraineth us; and we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead (under just sentence of death); and that we who live should henceforth not live unto ourselves but unto him who died for us."—2 Cor. 5:14, 15.

"In the cross of Christ we glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime."

Those whose eyes have been opened by the grace of God to see the divine plan emphasize more and more the value of the cross as the basis of reconciliation between God and man. There is a great falling away in our day from this foundation feature of the Gospel. . . .

Any other faith is not the true Christian faith, not the faith once delivered to the saints, not the faith that is pleasing to God, not the faith that is the basis for justification and forgiveness of sins, not the faith that is to be respected and honored, blessed and rewarded by the Lord in due time. We cannot enunciate this matter too distinctly, even though it may offend some to be told that they are not Christians in the Scriptural sense of the word when they no longer hold the doctrine of the atonement through the blood of the cross—through the death of Jesus. Ultimately this doctrine will be seen to be the touchstone which will clearly show who are the Lord's and who are not. Those who lose this hub or center of faith, lose all part and lot in Christ, so far, at least, as the present age is concerned. They are no more Christians than are Mohammedans or Jews or Confucians or Brahmins. Jews, Mohammedans and infidels believe that Jesus lived and that he died and that he was a great teacher, but this does not make them Christians and does not justify them. We are justified, as the Apostle points out, "Through faith in his blood."—Rom. 31:25.

"VIA DOLOROSA"—THE WAY OF THE CROSS.

The way from Pilate's judgment hall to Calvary was indeed a sorrowful way, a doleful way. Pilate felt uncomfortable in having done the only thing he could reasonably have been expected to do under all the circumstances. The chief priests and doctors of divinity had scored a victory, and might be expected to exult as they saw their victim led as a lamb to the slaughter. Yet we must give them credit for some conscience and must suppose that they were far from happy; that although they had said to Pilate, "His blood be upon us and upon our children," they felt a mysterious dread of this wonderful person against whom they were prevailing. To suppose that their hearts were not troubled would be to discredit them every way. On the way, tender women, not disciples of Jesus, wept as Jesus passed by. Pilate had endeavored to appeal to the accusers of Jesus by having him scourged and then presenting him before them, crying, *Ecce Homo*—Behold the man! Look at the man whom you are asking me to crucify; no man in all your nation has such a face and form as his; not one of you for a moment considers that he is a wicked man; his face shows to the contrary. Will you not be satisfied? Will not your anger against him be appeased by the scourging which he has received? Will you not consent that I should let him go? But all these appeals were futile. His enemies were so filled with bitterness and envy that they were blind to his personal attractions. These, however, appealed to the women as he passed; they wept. Jesus was the most composed of all in that scene, because he had the assurance that he was doing the Father's will. This assurance had kept him calm and unmoved from the moment the angel appeared in Gethsemane to give him the word of divine favor and thus strengthen him. He was ready to endure anything that would be the Father's will, that would carry out the Father's plan, he had such confidence in the wisdom, the love, the justice and the power of God. To the weeping women he said, "Weep not for me, weep for yourselves"—doubtless having in mind the awful trouble which thirty-seven years after came upon that city.

"LET HIM TAKE UP HIS CROSS AND FOLLOW ME."

Jesus, bearing his cross, headed the procession, accompanied by four Roman soldiers; following came the two thieves with their crosses and four soldiers guarding each, the whole under the charge of a Centurion. Our Redeemer, less coarse by nature, less animal, more intelligent than the thieves, was probably less able naturally than they to carry the heavy timber of the cross—besides, he had been under a nervous strain and without food for about twelve hours. Evidently he was scarcely able to carry his load, and the Centurion compelled Simon of Cyrene, a countryman, to bear the cross after Jesus. Whether this means that he walked behind Jesus in the procession, carrying the cross, or that he carried the hinder part of the cross with Jesus, is uncertain; but in any event, he had a most glorious opportunity, even though it was compulsory.

Many of the Lord's dear people, reading the account, have wished that they could have had a share in the carrying of that cross. Where were Peter, James and John and the others? Alas, they allowed fear to hinder them, to deprive them of a most glorious service. While thinking of this it is well to remember that our Lord has graciously provided that all of his followers may share in the carrying of his cross. The offense of the cross, the weight of the cross, has not ceased; the cross of Christ is still in the world; the privilege is still with us to bear it with him, following after him. Although the Apostles lost the privilege of bearing the literal cross for Jesus, they gloriously recovered from their fear, and we have the record of their noble service, bearing the cross of Christ for all the years of their lives afterwards.

Let us love much, and let us show our love by our zeal in cross-bearing; and if at any time that zeal grows cold, let us remember the axiom, "No cross, no crown"; let us remember the Apostle's words, "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him; if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him." Yet neither the fear of death nor the appreciation of the crown must be the controlling motive. The mainspring of our devotion to the Lord must be an appreciation of what he has done for us, our love to him, and our desire to do what would please him, and thus show a responsive love. Let us remember that while the Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church, was glorified long ago, there are still about us in the world those whom he recognizes as his brethren, as "members of his body," and that whatsoever we do to one of the least of these, whatever assistance we render to these in the bearing of their crosses, is so much that he will appreciate as manifesting our love for him, as so much that is done unto him.

"HE WAS NUMBERED WITH THE TRANSGRESSORS."

Our Lord's crucifixion between two thieves may be viewed from various standpoints. To himself it would mean the depths of humiliation. Every noble and pure man or woman prizing purity in his own heart would find it specially detestable to be so misunderstood as to be numbered with transgressors, murderers, thieves — accounted one of them. And if this is true with us in our imperfect condition of mind and heart, and our imperfect appreciation of justice and of sin, how much more intense must this feeling have been in the perfect one, our Lord. How he must have loathed sin, how utterly opposed to it in every sense of the word he must have been, and how much more shame he must have felt than we could possibly have felt in his position. From the heavenly Father's standpoint this permission that his Son be numbered with the transgressors was evidently to be a demonstration to angels and to men of the Son's loyalty of heart to the utmost extreme, as we read, "He humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross."

Thus the Lord demonstrated, not only by his willingness to die, but his willingness to die in the most despicable manner, his full self-renunciation, the complete deadness of his own will and the thorough aliveness of his own heart and mind to the Father's will. In all this he became an illustration to his followers, as the Apostle suggests, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God (no matter how deep the humiliation which obedience to God may bring) that he may exalt you in due time." From the standpoint of the priests and Pharisees the Lord's crucifixion with the two thieves was specially desirable; it would help to keep the people from thinking of him as a martyr, it would demean and degrade him before the people, and make any ashamed to acknowledge themselves the followers of a religious teacher who was publicly executed as a malefactor, as an enemy of God and man. How could it be expected that any could ever glory in the cross of Christ? But how wonderfully God's plans overrule all human arrangements, and make even the wrath and envy and *villainy* of the human heart work out to the praise and in accord with his plan?

KILLING THE PRINCE OF LIFE.

The distance from Pilate's palace to the Place of the Skull is not great, though the latter is outside the city wall. The spot was soon reached, the crosses were laid upon the ground, and the soldiers quickly stripped the prisoners and nailed them, probably with wooden spikes, to the crosses, which they then lifted and dropped into the holes previously prepared for them, the feet of the crucified coming within about two feet of the ground. The agony incident to such a proceeding can be better imagined than described, especially at the moment when the cross dropped into the socket, and when the weight of the body, together with the swinging and surging and jolting of the cross, would make the pain terrible in the extreme, more to one of refined temperament and nervous system than to the coarser and more brutal—severer, therefore, to our Lord than to his two companions. Well may the devoted disciples of Jesus say to themselves. "My Lord bore this for me," and we may ask ourselves in turn what have we borne for him of shame or ignominy or pain? The very thought of this should make us ashamed to mention boastfully any trials we may have endured, and also make us more courageous to be patient and to endure all things which divine providence may permit to come to our cup because of our discipleship.

THE KING OF THE JEWS.

It was Pilate's turn to get even with the envious and malicious Jewish rulers who had forced him, contrary to his will as well as contrary to justice, to crucify Jesus. It was customary to publish the crime for which the execution took place by a printed notice over the head of the victim. In Jesus' case he wrote, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Mark gives the inscription, "The King of the Jews," and Luke, "This Is the King of the Jews." All three may be correct, for the notice was written in three languages, Hebrew, Greek and Latin.

In his trial before the High Priest he was sentenced to death as a blasphemer in calling himself the Son of God; but, as we have seen, this charge would not stand before Pilate, since the Roman government cared nothing whether a man blasphemed one god or another. To secure his execution by the Romans he was charged with rebellion against Rome, claiming that he was the King of the Jews. Pilate's decision not to alter the writing was correct, and ultimately all the blind eyes of the world shall be opened to this great fact that Jesus was indeed divinely anointed to be the King of earth. But as he said, "My kingdom is not from hence"—not yet. As he represents elsewhere, the time is coming when "he shall take unto himself his great power and reign." Those who acknowledge him as King now are a very small and very insignificant people in the world—"not many great, not many wise, not many learned"—"chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith."

To some it seems to be a pleasing fiction to say that Jesus is now the King of the world and is reigning, that Christendom is his Kingdom, and that the 400,000,000 of nominal professors are his loyal subjects. Those who thus conclude are nearly as blind and prejudiced as were the doctors of divinity who secured our Lord's death. It would be as truthful to call black white as to call "Christendom" the empire of Christ and its people the servants of Christ. "His servants ye are to whom ye render service," was our Lord's standpoint, and accordingly the Lord has few real servants in the world today—the great majority are serving sin in some of its numerous forms of selfishness, and are glad to think that the day of Christ, the day of the Anointed, when he shall take to himself his great power and reign under the whole heaven, is far distant.

Those who *"love his appearing,"* whose souls long for the presence of the King and the inauguration of his reign of righteousness in the earth, are a woefully small number. But all who are of the "Little Flock" soldiers of the cross, should specially appreciate one another's fellowship and should be ready, as the Scriptures exhort, to "lay down their lives for the brethren." And he who would lay down his life for a brother will surely be careful in all his dealings to do nothing against the Truth but for the Truth, nothing to stumble any, but everything possible to assist the members of the body of Christ, "The feet of Him."

SITTING DOWN THEY WATCHED HIM THERE.
(Matt. 27:36.)

The Roman soldiers, ignorant of God and the principles of righteousness—their highest conception of responsibility being to obey orders—seemed to have no heart whatever; the quivering flesh of their victims seemed to have touched no tender spot. They sat down and looked at him, and straightway began to divide his garments amongst them. "The usual dress of a Jew consisted of five parts: The head dress, the shoes, the outer garment or toga, the girdle (one part for each of the soldiers) and the chiton"—the tunic, in our text called a coat—a kind of shirt fitting somewhat closely and reaching from the neck to the ankles, for which they cast lots.

As those soldiers coldly looked at the Lamb of God, who was suffering the Just for the unjust as their redemption price, and as they were dividing his raiment as their perquisites, they resembled to a considerable degree the whole of "Christendom" from that time to the present. Millions in all parts of the civilized world have heard of Jesus and his love and his sacrifice and that it was on our behalf, and are still totally unmoved, unconcerned, without thankfulness or appreciation. They are willing, indeed, to receive and divide amongst themselves day by day the various blessings and advantages which have come to them through his death, yet even these are received without appreciation or thankfulness or gratitude. The most kindly view of such an attitude of heart is that which the Apostle has expressed, saying, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the glorious light of God's goodness shining in the face of Jesus Christ should shine into their hearts."

WITH HIM IN HIS DYING HOUR.

With the Lord in his dying hour were four of his very special friends—his mother, her cousin, the wife of Cleopas, Mary Magdalene and John. We are not to think too severely of the apparent lack of courage on the part of the others of Jesus' friends. The popular bitterness which had led to the crucifixion of Jesus had extended in considerable measure to his followers. It was natural that they should be afraid; it had even been hinted that Lazarus would be put to death also. The three women with him might reasonably feel themselves free from danger of molestation notwithstanding their manifestation of interest in the suffering one; and as for John, we remember that he had a friend in the High Priest's household, who permitted him to be present when Jesus was first brought before the High Priest and when Peter was afraid to be known even in the outer apartments. Quite probably the High Priest's servant was present at the time of the crucifixion to give a report of the whole proceedings. John's courage to be present may have been influenced by these circumstances. It was at this time that Jesus, although in great pain, commended his mother to his disciple's care—"Woman, behold thy Son"; and to the disciple, "Behold thy mother." We cannot show our sympathy at Jesus' cross, but we can lend our presence and aid to dear "members of his body" in their dark hours; and *he will count it as done to himself.*

Another Scripture remained to be fulfilled. The prophet had declared of Him, "They gave me gall and vinegar to drink." This would be another mark for identification of him, and is given as the reason why Jesus mentioned this thirst. Doubtless, with a fever raging such as would be induced by the crucifixion, he had been thirsting for quite a while, but now the time was come to express the matter, to give occasion for the fulfillment of the Scripture respecting him. Gall and vinegar was given him, not as an injury but as a kindness. It was supposed that the mixture would assuage thirst to some degree.

Having thus fulfilled the various Scriptures relating to his career, our Lord realized that the end of his course had come. It was probably at this juncture that the Father's fellowship was withdrawn from him for a moment; that for a little space at least he should experience all that the sinner could ever experience of the withdrawal of divine favor; for he was being treated as the sinner for us that we on his account might be treated of God as righteous. Of all our Lord's experiences we believe that this moment, in which the Father completely hid his face from him, was the most trying moment, the severest ordeal, and the one apparently which our Lord had not foreseen. Bereft of every earthly comfort and favor, privilege and blessing, up to this moment he possessed a realization of fellowship and communion with the Father; but now for that to be taken away, that upon which his whole life had depended, that was the severest trial.

In agony he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me! What have I done to cause a cloud to come between thee and me? Have I not been faithful even unto death?" He probably soon realized the meaning of this experience, that it was necessary for him thus to fill up the cup of suffering and to demonstrate to the very limit his loyalty and obedience and to thus fully and completely meet the penalty against our race. Probably still under this cloud but with this realization he cried, "It is finished!" and died. We often speak of people dying of broken hearts, and use the term figuratively, but so far as can be known our Lord experienced this very matter actually. Apparently he died by the actual bursting of his heart. It is the tendency of deep grief to interfere with the circulation of the blood and to cause a pressure upon the heart. We have all felt this at times—a weight and heaviness of heart under certain peculiar nervous strains. This in our Lord's case seems to have been so intense that the heart was literally ruptured. He died of a broken heart.—Z. '05, 152-155.

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The Lord appreciates those who recognize principle.—Z. '05, 89.

Pastor Russell passed forever out of reach of the antitypical Pharoah, Satan, in the fall of 1916. But in steadfast belief that "his works do follow him," we hold that he supervises, by the Lord's arrangement, the work yet to be done.—G. 256.

The mind of the Lord, inculcated by His Word, teaches that we are to love the beautiful, pure, true, noble; we are to love (in the sense of sympathizing with) the weak, the penitent and oppressed, who are seeking for the paths of righteousness and truth; but we are to *"hate iniquity"* and *"every false way,"* and all the meanness and sin which is willful, against light and of the Devil.—Z. '11, 407.

Let us beware of a *sectarian* spirit; let us see to it that our love for the Lord and all of his brethren is sincere, and not a personal and selfish one for ourselves or some denomination, otherwise we know not into what evils we might be led.—Z. '05, 107.

There are many (great company) who demonstrate by their lives that, if everything were favorable, they would be very loyal to the Lord and very loyal to righteousness. It is merely because the NARROW WAY is *so steep, so up-hill and rugged,* that they have not the courage to go on. They fail to display that love and zeal which the Lord has set as the mark for participation in the Royal Priesthood.—Z. '14, 68.

Neither are we to waste sympathy upon those who depart. If we can neither persuade them nor pull them out of the fire; we must let them go, and should turn at once and render aid to others more worthy. When the Lord has put any out of the Light (Matthew 22:13, 14), we cannot hope to bring them back. Had it been proper for them to remain in the light, if they had been worthy of it, He would not have permitted them to be put out of it.—Z. '16, 262.

We cannot imagine that if anyone would reject the Lord *in any sense of the word* it would still leave him in the Light of Truth. We must understand that if anyone rejects the Lord, the light of Truth will gradually pass from him, and he will see no more than many do, no more than a nominal church-goer or any worldly person. Such passing into outer-darkness is a sign that the Lord's Favor has been lost. To what extent it has been lost we might not wish to determine, but if, in conjunction with this, there is manifested the character of the Adversary, the spirit of Satan—anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife—then we should conclude that the Spirit of the Lord had left and that the loser was dead—"twice dead, plucked up by the roots."—Jude 12.

It would not be worth while to pray longer for such a one, especially after we had done all in our power. God is willing to do all that can be done, but he has certain fixed laws and PRINCIPLES, and *if anyone has once enjoyed these and then scorned them, the Lord would not change his principles for any prayers, even though offered carefully with tears.*—Z. '10, 148.

WE MUST NOT RENDER UNTO CAESAR THE THINGS OF GOD. HERE LIES THE SNARE FOR MANY OF GOD'S PEOPLE.—Z. '14, 236.

If we affiliate with the Lord's enemies, we shall *at least* get into a luke-warm condition towards Him and His friends; and the luke-warm, God declares He will spew out of His mouth. We should cultivate warmth of heart toward all who trust in the precious blood and are consecrated to our Redeemer as their Lord and Head. There must be no luke-warmness there.—Z. '16, 262.

He told them plainly that only through much tribulation would they be able to enter the Kingdom class; that the tribulations would prove their love of righteousness, their loyalty to God; and that God had purposely made the way so *narrow that only the few, the very choicest of humanity in God's sight, could find it*—a very *few* walking in that way to its *further end* of glory, honor and immortality.—Z. '14, 91.

We can be content to leave our experiences *entirely* in the hands of Him who loves us, and can have an inward peace and calm and a rest of soul, knowing that no outward storm will be permitted but such as the Father sees will bring forth in us the peaceable fruits of righteousness, if we are properly exercised thereby.—Z. '14, 54.

God is calling for not only saints, but those whose saintship will endure fiery trials, testings, in respect to their love for God and for the brethren, and in respect to their loyalty, even unto death.—Z. '14, 45.

Let us, then, who have accepted the Lord and his Word, cast away everything of doubt and of fear, and live rejoicingly day by day while seeking to walk in the footsteps of him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood. The joy of the Lord is our strength, the joy which God gives, the joy which comes from realizing that the Lord is our fortress, and that no ill can betide us without his knowledge, and that he has promised that all things shall work together for good to them that love him—with all their heart, mind, soul and strength.—Z. '05, 365.

Bunyan, in his story of how Christian fled from the City of Destruction to Paradise, tells us how he was attacked in the way by two great lions, and how he trembled and expected to be destroyed, until ultimately he discovered that the lions were chained and could go so far and no farther against him, and that he had room to pass between. This allegory illustrates to us our own experiences in life as Christians. Lions great and small threaten the Lord's people in the present time, and, as in Daniel's case, the threats are generally with the view to turn us aside from duty and the service of the Lord. These are tests that come to us. If we yield to them we are proving that we are not of the overcoming class; if we stand faithful to the Lord they will demonstrate that he is able to carry us through all the trials and difficulties and diverse experiences of this present time.—Z. '05, 298.

We must remember that a part of our lesson as the Lord's followers is that we must learn to walk in the footsteps of Jesus *trustfully*—by faith and not by sight; that we must learn patient endurance.—Z. '05, 345.

We therefore caution all who by the grace of God have been translated out of darkness into God's marvelous light, that they walk proportionately the more humbly before the Lord: Because, if the light received should become darkness, how great would be the darkness, and how hopeless the condition! It would, as the Apostle declares, be better for such never to have known the way of life.—Z. '05, 216.

It is not too much to say that all who receive this anointing of the Lord must ultimately be of this David, or beloved, character. *The spirit of love must be in them—love for the Lord and love one for the other; else they are none of His.*—Z. '15, 89.

Our main object, therefore, in studying God's Word and his character as therein revealed, should always be to bring our own hearts and minds into closer sympathy and likeness and co-operation with his.—Z. '05, 329.

God lays great stress upon loyal and loving *obedience* on the part of all his children. It was only a little matter of disobedience that cost Adam and his posterity so dearly, and that will bring similar results to all those who, having once escaped the condemnation of death through faith in Christ the Redeemer, thereafter refuse to stand before God in the robe of his righteousness, but prefer to appear in their own. All such were appointed to stumble; but blessed are the meek, for they shall stand. "The Lord knoweth them that are his."—Z. '05, 266.

It comforts us to remember that Satan and every evil is subject to the Almighty's power, and that in the case of the Lord's consecrated and their interests he is both able and willing to overrule, so that whatever he permits, them will result in their greater blessing.—Z. '05, 41.

Our Lord's words are not one-sided, not merely directed against sin in one class, that his word is sharp and cutting in every direction, that sin is reproved by him as much when found in his most earnest followers as when found elsewhere.—Z. '05, 170.

Whoever introduces into the Church that which is defiling, whoever does injury to any of its living stones, is an evildoer in the highest sense of that term, in that he is defiling, injuring the body of Christ, which is the Church.—Z. '05, 282.

The statement, "Who shall stand when he appeareth?" should not be understood to imply that all would be standing at the time of his appearing. There would be some who would think that they were standing, but who would really not be in the Lord's favor at all. But the meaning of this text, to our mind, is, *Who shall stand the test?*—Z. '10, 355.

The Lord's people, seeking to walk in his footsteps, continually find that the world is still full of envy and malice and hatred.—Z. '05, 58.

Amongst the Lord's people there is nothing more important than that they should learn to be very just. While it is right to be loving, kind, generous, yet *justice* is the very foundation of character. All love and kindness not based upon justice are neither satisfactory nor pleasing to the Lord.—Z. '14, 246.

Let us, then, endeavor to draw out before us some of the more striking features of "the world to come," and, by the contemplation of its attractiveness, endeavor to school our hearts into more ardent thirst to participate in its blissful scenes.—Z. '07, 103.

"SANCTIFY THEM THROUGH THY TRUTH."

The prayer, continuing, points out two things—first, how the Lord's followers will be kept, and, secondly, why they will be kept. (1) They will be kept because they are not of the world, because they have taken a *positive stand* on the Lord's side, because they have reckonedly died to the world and sin and been begotten again of the holy Spirit to newness of life. (2) They will be kept in the world, but not of it, by the power of the Truth in their hearts. The Truth will sanctify or separate them. Not any truth, not all truth, *but THE* Truth.—Z. '05, 137.

"The *darkness* hateth the *light*." We do not doubt that these evil spirits would do injury to the servants of the Truth if permitted. Evidently they are under some restraint as respects the Lord's people. Later on they may be permitted to operate through others, as Satan entered into Judas before the betrayal.—Z. '05, 25.

Our Adversary, intent upon maintaining his hold upon the minds of God's people, has fought every inch of Truth for the past four centuries. He has made it hot for those whom the Lord has by his grace been leading step by step into the clear light of the knowledge of the glory of God and of his wonderful Plan of Salvation. Shall we wonder if our Adversary still pursues the same course and with still greater vigor than ever—with still more *"energy"* than ever? By no means! We accept his present opposition as the fulfillment of Scripture and we expect no cessation.—Z. '10, 102.

The disciples at the First Advent did not realize how near they were to the experiences of Gethsemane and Calvary. It may be so with us now, for aught we know. Therefore we realize the importance of our lives being such as the Lord has marked out for us. Watch ye, lest ye fall in the hour of temptation! The hour of temptation was upon them; therefore it was important that they keep themselves in the right attitude. And so should we do now.—Z. '14, 382, 383.

"HE THAT ENDURETH."

We are assured that those who love the Lord, and who because of this will receive the Kingdom, will be those whose love will have been tested by trials and temptations on the way. Those who do not love the Lord with *ALL* their hearts—in whom self or some other idol has first place—will be seduced by the world, the flesh or the Adversary, into some form of rebellion against the Divine Word or Divine providences. They will have schemes and theories which they will prefer to the Lord's Plan. These when analyzed will usually be found to be based either upon selfishness or upon ambition or an evil spirit of envy, hatred, etc. The Lord's leading and the Lord's words lose their attraction to such, and they lose their interest correspondingly. Like those who turned away from the Lord at the First Advent, declaring, "This is a hard saying," they walk no more with Him.

As there are some substances which are short and brittle, so are there some which have fibre, strength, endurance. The Lord chooses for Himself such characters as have the strong, enduring qualities—fortitude, patience, longsuffering, etc. Some there are who walk close to the Lord who will not be driven from Him by any of the arts and wiles of the Adversary. They are such as are at heart fully the Lord's—not their own; they follow wherever the Lord may lead, because they have no will except the will of God. These will follow the Lord in the *narrow way* of trial, discipline and testings during the present life, and by and by, as He has declared, "They shall walk with Me in white; for they are worthy."—Revelation 3:4. Z. '14, 149.

Nothing could induce us to part with that knowledge of God and His Plan in which we rejoice today. All the world over, that which makes the Lord's people appear happy is not special beauty on the outside, but the Light on the inside, the Light of the Knowledge of the glory of God, the Light of the Knowledge of the Divine Truth in our hearts. This Light shining through these earthen vessels is heart-cheering and comforting. We cannot imagine anything better. As the poet says, "It satisfies my longings, as nothing else can do." We are happy to be co-workers with God; and by and by we shall be co-workers with Him on the other side the veil.—Z. '14, 329.

The Master gave all His followers fair warning that they were not to expect the world to appreciate their attitude. One might well reason that if one gave up sin and adopted a righteous course, the world would esteem him; that all would see the worthiness of his character and would show him special deference. But we must not expect this under the present reign of Sin. It would be a very broad way into the Kingdom, and a great many then might take this course for the favor of man, for the prosperity which it would bring them. The Lord could never demonstrate our fitness for the Kingdom honors under such conditions.—Z. '14, 292.

What things, then, are God's? What do we owe to Him? We answer that as His creatures we are His. *EVERY talent and power we possess ought by right of justice to be used in the service of our Creator and for His praise.*—Z. '14, 235, 236.

Rendering to God the things that are God's will eventually cost us every earthly interest and prospect. But to the loyal, the faithful, God provides compensation. Instead of the world's smile which they lose, they receive the smile of the Heavenly Father and the favor of their Redeemer. They have also the Master's promise of a hundredfold more in this present life in compensation for everything which they sacrifice for His Cause, the Cause of God, the Cause of Truth Divine! And with this abundant compensation in the present life comes the assurance of everlasting life in the coming Age, under its favorable conditions.—Z. '14, 236.

We are not to understand that the Lord keeps any who do not themselves make the proper effort to *know* the will of God that they may *do* it.—Z. '14, 216.

When we remember that the Adversary is to be permitted to bring "strong delusions" upon the Lord's people for the very purpose of sifting out all not truly his . . . (2 Thess. 2:10-12), it should surely call forth our thanks to God that another year finds us still STANDING FAST. —Z. '03, 3.

It is glorious to serve Christ in honesty and in fullness of fidelity. *There is an ineffable joy in being on the right side,* in knowing that ones service is toward victory and that beyond the field of blood and the valley of shadows is an abundant entrance into the joys and peace of the triumphant King of kings. For that hope none should shrink from the harness of battle, none quail before the rage of the enemy, and none tremble before the certainty of hunger, thirst, nakedness, wounds, (prison) or death.—Z. '03, 84.

The true sheep will listen intently for the faintest sound of the shepherd's voice. It will respond quickly to his call; it will watch for his guidance.—Z. '14, 200.

Truely "wise" will those of the consecrated prove to be who, neglecting worldly enchantments, and earthly hopes and prizes, and with hearts yearning and waiting for the Beloved, are found ready and proved worthy of the great exaltation promised, as the Bride, the Lamb's wife.

"Bride of the Lamb, thy charms,
Oh, may we share."

—C. 193, 194.

As we come more clearly to realize the high attainment of character required of all who will *ever* be accorded everlasting life on *any* plane, and how very few seem to make any serious profession of or attempt at *perfect love* as a governing principle in their lives, we are led to wonder if the *two* sons of Aaron who were destroyed by the Lord were not intended to typify the large proportion of consecrated and spirit-begotten ones who have failed to reach the high standard of heart necessary, and who will consequently not be worthy of any life, but will, on the contrary, sink into oblivion—the Second Death.—T. Footnote, 119.

Moreover, aside from the parables, our own experience teaches that amongst those who have made a real consecration to the Lord and who have for a time manifested a thorough devotion to him, some fall away to the extent of carelessness, lukewarmness. . . . . We cannot suppose for a moment that such would be accepted of the Lord under the strict terms and conditions of the high calling on the *narrow* way and the faithfulness unto death—the terms and conditions everywhere implied in connection with the little flock. —Z. '07, 316.

The ass knoweth her Master's crib: She knows to look for her food as of her Master's providing, and goes again to the same crib where she receives his bountiful supply, that she may be again and again refreshed and nourished. But our Lord intimates that the stupid ass could give pointers to some of his people. And how true this is! Here and there we find some who, after feeding at the Master's crib, practically say to themselves and to others, "Yes, there was good, clean, provender in that crib; it tasted good, I feel refreshed; but . . . let us browse and wander about —we may come across another crib containing still better provender.—Z. '07, 248.

Not only is Love the greatest of all the graces, but really, as we have seen, it is the sum of all the fruits of the Spirit. It is *everlasting*—"Love never faileth." It is for those who develop this quality to its glorious perfection that eternal life has been provided. And those who possess the sacrificial love which our dear Master possessed, who so love as to gladly lay down their lives for the brethren, will gain the fullest and grandest life of all—Divine life.—2 Peter 1:4. Z. '15, 118.

The supply of manna was a beautiful figure of the supply of grace in Christ; it needed to be gathered daily; it would not keep over for succeeding days. . . . Our gathering of the manna is to be day by day; our feeding on the heavenly bread is to be a continuous privilege, without which we will not have the strength for the journey of life; but with it we would be strong in the Lord, and may perchance be permitted to assist others by the dispensing of divine grace to them. . . . . .

Our Lord declared himself to be the Bread from heaven. . . . As we partake of our Lord's qualities they become ours as we feed upon Him in our Hearts we become strong in faith and in all the graces of his Spirit.—Z. '07, 186.

There is much significance in that word *"study";* and only the studious find the *narrow* way to the divine approval and acceptance. *Study* to show thyself approved—*study* the doctrine; *study* your course of conduct, to keep it in harmony with the doctrine. *Study* how to promote the peace and prosperity of Zion, and how to shield yourself and others from the missiles of error and from the poison of an evil, world spirit.—Z. '02, 318.

INTERESTING LETTERS

Dear Brethren:

The little class of "Stand Fast Bible Students" in this city are rejoicing and growing by bounds.

There are just seven who are willing, yea, glad to be counted as naught for Christ's sake. We are holding three meetings weekly, and the Lord is richly blessing us, verifying His promise "where two or three are gathered in my name, there will I be to bless." The "Old Corn Gems" are much appreciated and have been a source of great blessing. We often think of the dear Comforters and pray for them our Father's richest blessing.

We shall continue to pray that all your steps may be guided by the dear Lord. Pray for us.

Your brethren by His grace,

Washington Ecclesia.

Dear Brother in the Anointed:

We are sending you a report of the Memorial supper held here in this city April 13, afer 6 P. M.

We held an all-day service with the thoughts connected with the Memorial. There were sixteen present; all Stand Fast, sealed saints. Everyone said it was the best and most effective service enjoyed along the Journey. Everyone is impressed with the thought of it being the last Memorial on this side of the veil. We are praying and hoping it so.

Brethren, pray for us. We remember you and all the dear comforters at the throne of heavenly Grace, and especially do we mention the dear Angels as they go through the land warning not to flee to the little city. Ere long we will reach the mountain. How glorious!

We have a small class here compared with the classes on the coast, but we are all wideawake and standing fast, come what may.

May the dear Lord bless and keep you, dear brethren, even unto death.

Yours in the one hope,

Kansas City Ecclesia, Mo.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER TEN

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A WORD OF WARNING

"Make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed." Heb. 12:13.

We have heard from some that, while they had great blessings when they carefully observed the Vow, they gradually grew careless of it and began to lose their blessings, and stumbled into sin. We shall never be beyond danger, dear Brethren, so long as we are in the flesh. Hence everything that we can do on the side of the Lord, on the side of righteousness, as New Creatures enlisted under the banner of our Redeemer, we should do—for the maintenance of our own standards and for the assistance of others in the fight against the world, the flesh, and the Adversary, in which we have enlisted.

The text at the head of this article should never be forgotten by any of the Soldiers of the Cross. The strongest need to remember it, and surely the weaker ones need to obey it. We are all lame. None is able to walk uprightly, perfectly, in the footprints of our Lord. At very best, we limp. How necessary, then, that we do our best to avoid trials and temptations which would be a special strain upon us because of our weaknesses of the flesh! How we should seek to walk close to the Lord and to hold firmly to His hand while passing through the trials and the difficulties of the present time!

Does someone suggest that such a course represents weakness and dependence? Surely, it does; and surely the one who does not know of his weakness and dependence upon the Lord has not learned his primary lesson! Let us not be ashamed of regulating our lives so as to avoid temptations as far as possible; for this is the wise course admonished by the Lord's Word. To be proud, self-confident, and willing to trust in ourselves anywhere bespeaks the spirit which is not in close fellowship with the Lord, who shows His face to the humble and the meek.

If there are special trials upon the world and upon the Lord's followers now, we may expect that these will be increasingly severe in coming days . . . , How necessary it is that the Lord's followers shall be courageous, strong, determined for the right—especially in all matters of self-control!

"He that ruleth his own spirit (his own mind) is greater than the warrior who captures a city," is the inspired announcement. Let us seek to be great from the Divine viewpoint—pleasing to the Lord; guarding well our words and thoughts and doings, not merely on our account, but additionally in the interest of all with whom we have to do. Thus we shall more and more be bright and shining lights, "showing forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light."—1 Peter 2:9. Z. '16, 314.

OUR COMFORTERS' ROUTE

Our Comforters now in the southern field, Brothers Hadley, Yerex and Palmer, have been joined by Brother F. M. Campbell, of Minneapolis. Brother W. T. Sessoms, of Chicago, is also co-operating, going in advance of the Comforters for the purpose of making all necessary arrangements for conventions. The proposed convention schedule, as it remains to be carried out, is as follows:

San Antonio, Texas	May 31 and June 1
Houston, Texas	June 6 to 8
Jacksonville, Florida	June 13 to 15
Chicago, Illinois	June 27 to 29

One or more of the Comforters will also serve at Washington, D. C., Boston, Mass., and as many other points as possible along the route of their present tour. All of the dear friends along the line will be notified in time to make all desirable arrangements.

Delayed Memorial Reports.

Minneapolis	64	Estherville, Io.	8
Eugene, Ore.	18	Staunton, Va.	3
Aberdeen, Wash.	16	Doughty, Mont.	2
Elkader, Iowa	12		

If by the grace of God we have in any degree been used by him in serving . . . . others, we rejoice in the *service* and will continue to strive to be faithful to our stewardship; but as for vanity on this account, we see no room or reason for it. We are well aware that our Master could readily have found many others as fit and worthy of the service, and many more capable naturally; we can only suppose, therefore, that herein as previously —"God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things that are mighty . . . and the things that are despised . . . to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence."—1 Cor. 1:27-29. Z. '05, 216.

Standing Fast At The Mark

Brother Russell has repeatedly forewarned us, that great tests and trials would be permitted to come upon the consecrated believers to try their hearts, and to sift out all those who had not attained unto the "Mark of Crystallized Character," the "Mark of heart-likeness to Christ"; the "Mark of Perfect Love."

During the past twelve months these tests have come upon us; and even as the Psalmist prophesied a thousand have fallen at our side, and ten thousand at our right hand. Only a few have been able to withstand, a few who are *wholeheartedly* the Lord's a few who realize that their citizenship is in Heaven, and who remember, that they belong to a new dispensation; who have therefore not compromised with the old order of things on any pretext whatever, neither have they, like Lot's wife, turned again to gaze upon that which Jehovah has cast into the burning.

We remember that when they were placing our Lord upon the Cross of Calvary, they offered him myrrh and wine to drink, which would deaden the pain; but He refused, preferring to drink to the dregs the cup which the Heavenly Father in His Wisdom and Love had poured for Him. He realized that neither the Roman Soldiers, nor the High Priests had prepared His cup of Suffering, but Jehovah Himself: And so with us neither Kings nor Clergy have prepared our cup for us, but the Father. "Knowing our frame" it will not be too bitter, but realizing the companionship of the Saints as we drink, it will indeed be a Cup of Blessing. Shall we therefore not drink of the cup which our Father hath given? Shall we Stand Fast? . . . or shall we compromise?

There is a great blessing in store for all those who delight their hearts in the way of the Lord.—Z. '13, 87.

Published by the Stand Fast Bible Students, under the supervision of members of a committee of seven. F. McKercher, Chairman, Box 939, Portland, Oregon.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER TEN

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Cannan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL. Z. '18:51.

What Brother Russell Said About

"THE SIN UNTO DEATH"

"THERE IS A SIN UNTO DEATH"

—1 John 5:16—

Once we were inclined to believe that the final results of God's great Plan of Salvation would show the vast majority of his creatures saved and granted eternal life through faith in Christ and obedience of heart. However, as the years roll by and as our view of the Divine requirement becomes more clear, our expectations are considerably modified. From our present viewpoint it will not surprise us if the number going into the Second Death will be a considerable one.

This does not mean that our clearer sight shows the love of God to be less than we had at first supposed, nor that the provision made will come short and fail to grant a full opportunity of eternal life to every creature. *It does mean that daily we are coming to see in a clearer light the high standard which God will require of all who will be granted life eternal at any time and on any plane.*

The fact is that God leaves the human will entirely free; that he seeks not the worship of those whom he will be obliged to coerce and restrain, but merely "seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in Truth." God's provision is that with the close of the Millennial Age "there shall be no more crying, no more sighing, no more dying"; because there shall be no more sin; because all the former things of sin shall have passed away. Putting these items together we perceive that the tests to prove who are worthy and who are unworthy of life eternal must be very crucial. None must go beyond the Millennial Age whose heart is not perfect; for if any others should be admitted there it would mean a perpetual danger of recurrence of sin in some form—a menace to the perfect bliss of that blessed state.

The world will have its purgatorial experiences during the Millennial Age—its blessings under the reign of the glorified Messiah, the Mediator of the New Covenant, Head and Body. By lessons, encouragements and chastisements it will learn the lesson of obedience to the Divine will, that thus it may attain to the full perfection of God's likeness and to life eternal. But failing to attain this blessed state during that time appointed, the only alternative will be Second Death, for no provision is made for sin or sinners beyond the Millennium.

THE CHURCH'S TRIAL, as we have seen, is now taking place during this Gospel Age. Every justified believer who knowingly and intelligently consecrated himself and whose consecration the Lord has accepted by begetting him of the holy Spirit—every such one is on trial now, for either life or death, and he can have no future opportunity. In other words, the trial of the spirit-begotten ones of this age will eventuate in eternal life on the spirit plane or eternal death, just as the trial of the world in the time of Restitution will eventuate in eternal life on the human plane or in eternal death.

Consider what this means: It means that all who will be saved during the Millennium must attain to a condition of ACTUAL perfection and absolute heart loyalty to God, absolute love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity, if they would have eternal life. *It means to you and me and all other spirit-begotten ones of this age that, if we do not reach a PERFECTION OF HEART-DEVELOPMENT during the period of our trial, we shall die the Second Death.* Thank God, it does not mean a perfection of the flesh, which would be impossible to us; but a perfection of the spirit, a perfection of the New Mind, a perfection of the will. But, oh, how much a PERFECT HEART signifies! No wonder our dear Redeemer said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God!" Any impurity of heart, of intention; any degre of evil contention, anger, hatred, strife, bitterness of heart, would mean just so much shortage of the Divine standard—perfect love.

We are not competent to judge, however. Some may have perfect love in their hearts who, because of imperfections in their flesh, make a poor showing of it. IN OUR EXPERIENCE, HOWEVER, COMPARATIVELY FEW EVEN MAKE THE CLAIM OF PERFECT LOVE, EITHER FOR GOD OR FOR THE BRETHREN OR FOR NEIGHBORS, NOT TO MENTION THEIR ENEMIES. WE MAY BE SURE THAT OF ALL SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN ONES IN SUCH A CONDITION AT THE TIME OF DEATH THERE WILL BE NO PLACE FOUND AMONGST THOSE COUNTED WORTHY OF LIFE ETERNAL. THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE FOR THEM WILL BE SECOND DEATH.

They could not be of the "little flock" because God has foreordained that every member of it must be a "copy of his dear Son." "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." (Rom. 8:29.) Can they not, then, be of the "great company"? We answer, No. All who would be of the "great company" must, through tribulation, attain to heart perfection, in order to be accounted worthy of life eternal. The difference between the "great company" of overcomers and the "little flock" of "more than conquerors" is that the former prove faithful under stress, when forced to the decision, while the latter class, the "little flock," possess more zeal, press forward joyfully to do, to be, to suffer, to serve; but both classes, to be overcomers at all, and to get eternal life at all, must reach the mark of perfect love.

Ah, yes, God's ways are wise and just and loving. It would not be to his glory nor in the interests of his faithful ones or others for him to admit to eternal life conditions any deficient in love. Does this alarm us and cause us to fear for our own acceptance and our own attaining of eternal life? The Apostle says, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." (Heb. 4:1.) Let the thought stimulate us to a renewed zeal and energy in conquering self and the old nature and in pressing on from glory to glory and from one degree to another higher degree of likeness to our Lord.

We feel sure that, in the Lord's providence, the Vow . . . is proving a great blessing and great help to many. . . . It is proving a blessing to many to daily read it every morning in connection with the Manna text and comment and morning devotion. It helps to impress upon the mind and upon the heart the very things which are most necessary to be remembered and yet most likely to be forgotten in the necessary hurry and push of the present life. Let us with deliberation and determination take all the vows that will assist us to a closer walk with God and to the binding of our sacrifice to the altar. We shall surely need in the trial time which is now upon the Church every assistance which the Lord provides, that we may be able to STAND (FAST). . . . —Z. '09, 157-158.

VARYING DEGREES OF LOVE

The article in a recent number of this journal entitled, "There Is a Sin Unto Death," appears to have created a very profound impression upon many of our readers. We are glad of this: "To be forewarned is to be forearmed." The central thought of that article suggested that possibly in the past we had underestimated the number who will eventually be remanded to the Second Death by the great Judge. It calls attention to the fact that none could reasonably and properly be acceptable to God and receive his blessing of eternal life except as they should first attain his character likeness. Because "God is love" this is the standard for all whom he will acknowledge as his children on either the heavenly or the earthly plane of perfect existence. The Divine Law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind and strength and thy neighbor as thyself," must be fully complied with. The Church of this Gospel Age must reach this glorious standard in the spirit of their minds, in their hearts; the imperfections of their flesh being covered by the grace of God through their faith in Christ. The world during the Millennial Age must reach the standard of that perfect law actually. More than this, after the standard or mark is reached the Lord demands that character in harmony with this standard shall become fixed. To accomplish this, besetments and trials and testings are permitted and are especially severe, crucial, after this mark has been attained. "The Lord your God doth prove you, whether you do love the Lord your God with all your heart or no."

These premises our readers in general will recognize as sound, Scriptural and logical. It follows, therefore, that all who do not attain this standard of character cannot have the gift of God, eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Fortunately this trial for life or death eternal is not now upon the world of mankind in general but only upon the Church. Nor is it upon the Church nominal, but merely upon those believers who have made consecration of themselves and been begotten of the holy Spirit. If these shall fall away, "There remaineth no more sacrifice for their sins," the Apostle declares. Let us be glad that it is not ours to judge the hearts of our brethren. We are glad to wish well to all and to hope that the great Judge may see grounds for excusing many of the blemishes of the brethren, which are manifest to us, and of our blemishes manifest to them. The Scriptures declare that the Lord judgeth the heart and not the outward appearance. It is ours, therefore, to hope all things favorable and to even doubt nothing, except as we may see evil fruitage in those claiming to be brethren—fruitage of conduct and spirit positively contrary to the Word and Spirit of the Lord. Even then we are not to bring against them any railing accusation, but to leave them in the Lord's hands.

With our most generous thoughts, however, we cannot blind ourselves to the fact that not many amongst the Lord's professedly consecrated followers give strong evidence of being at the mark of perfect love toward God and their fellow-beings. The Apostle intimates that for such we should fear and, bringing home the lesson, we should fear for ourselves—"Let us fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest any of us should seem to come short of it."—Heb. 4:1.

In view of the strictness of this Divine test and our own inability to see it lived up to by many and our carefulness and fear for ourselves, we can only hope that the great majority of professed Christians have never really been spirit-begotten and are not, therefore, subject to this searching test of character in the present life. Indeed, it seems rather remarkable that *some of those who recently have "gone out from among us because they are not of us," seem to have their contention, partially at least, along these very lines: They dispute that . . . God has made the path to glory a NARROW one of self-sacrifice,* or that the sufferings of Christ, the Head, are to be shared by the Church, the members of his Body. Such a position on the part of those once begotten of the holy Spirit and who have tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the coming age would seem to indicate a blindness which imply the loss of the illumination of the holy Spirit, as they had once enjoyed it. AND THIS WOULD IMPLY THE SECOND DEATH. Let us prefer, however, to suppose that they never were really enlightened—never were really begotten of the holy Spirit; that they had merely made a consecration to God to live moral lives and to forward his cause—without making a full surrender in the proper Scriptural manner laying down life and everything at the Lord's feet, "presenting their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God and their reasonable service." Instead of understanding spiritual things they may merely have been repeating spiritual precepts, without true comprehension.

Here we are reminded of a conversation that we once had with a lady. She said, "My husband has made full consecration of himself to the Lord and professes to be begotten of the holy Spirit and to see various teachings in 'Millennial Dawn,' 'Tabernacle Shadows,' etc., which, in connection with the Bible, give him a great illumination respecting the Divine will. I, on the contrary, have never made such a consecration, yet I can understand those same spiritual things. How do you account for it?" In reply we outlined the type; the Court of the Tabernacle with its Altar representing faith in the forgiveness of sins through Christ's sacrifice; the Laver representing the putting away of the filth of the flesh, etc. We reminded the lady that the tabernacle stood in this Court yet was separated from it by the first veil or curtain, which represented the death of the human will in complete consecration to the Divine will. We said to her, According to your own statement, you are outside that curtain. You have never yet made a full consecration of your all to the Lord. Your husband has made such a consecration, has experienced such a death of his will as is represented by passing under that curtain, and he has arisen on the other side of it a New Creature, begotten of the holy Spirit. He tells you what he sees—the golden walls of the Tabernacle proper, the heavy Curtain, or second vail, separating between the Holy and the Most Holy, the Table of Shew-Bread, the Golden Candlestick whose light illuminates everything, the incense altar from whence proceeds the sacrifice of incense and prayer beyond the Second Vail into the Most Holy to cover the mercy-seat. You give attention to your husband's description of these things; you have them all in mind; yet you do not see in the same particular sense and degree in which he sees. You are trusting to his word, in which you have absolute confidence. He is trusting in the everlasting actualities with which he is directly associated.

May it not be that many more are in this condition than have plainly told us so? Surely we have now come to the time when all who have not made an actual, bona fide consecration of their lives to the Lord—a full and complete surrender of their wills—will be separated from the consecrated ones. "The Lord your God doth prove you, whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart or no."

"STAR DIFFERETH FROM STAR."

Another question arises: Since it is evident that all must reach the standard of perfect love, in order to attain everlasting life on any plane, what would be the test by which the different degrees of glory will be awarded, as suggested by the Apostle's assurance that, "as star differeth from star in glory," so also will it be in the resurrection of the Church?

We reply that since the very least one admitted to eternal life must have reached the mark of perfect love, it follows that these different degrees of reward will represent different degrees of loving zeal on the part of those AFTER they shall have reached the standard of perfect love. For instance, St. Paul was not merely anxious to attain the fruits and graces of the holy Spirit; he was not merely willing to suffer with Christ, if need be; but his zeal led him beyond this—to glory in tribulations also; to rejoice to be accounted worthy to suffer for the cause of his Lord; to rejoice to lay down his life for the brethren. He was not only glad to have fellowship in Christ's sufferings and to drink of his cup, but he had so much zeal that he rejoiced if he could get more than his portion, more than his share. He was on the alert for opportunities for service. If others used them, well. If he could stir up the love and zeal of others, well. But if he found some work undone which he might accomplish, he delighted to do it. Well did he say that we might take him as an example in following after our Lord Jesus. Surely we may conclude that he will be one of the brightest shiners in the heavenly Kingdom and that in following his example we also may become more and more pleasing to our Lord —not by wildly beating the air, but with wisdom and prudence and faithfulness doing those things which the Lord had indicated would be pleasing in his sight, as evidencing our loyalty to him, his brethren and his truth.

IS LOVE THE ONLY TEST?

Another inquires, "Is love the only test?" We find that some of those who have opposed the Vow and now are gradually becoming more and more opposed to the various features of the Truth are quite bitter, malicious and strifeful; but we know a few of them who at least have a form of meekness and who on this very account seem to exercise the more power to create discord, because some of the friends reason that he or she cannot have forsaken the Lord nor been forsaken by the Lord, else they would not have so kindly a manner. My question is, Is love (gentleness) the sole test of our membership in the Body of Christ?

Our answer is No and Yes. No, it is not the only test as viewed by the ordinary mind, unguided by the Scriptures. Do we not know worldly people who are very kindly disposed and moral and gentle and patient and generous? Do we not know Christian Scientists and many others, whom we believe to be thoroughly out of relationship to the Lord and entirely cut off from the leadings of his Spirit, possessing these same traits of character—some of them to an admirable degree? From this standpoint we must answer the question negatively and say that more than such a love and willingness must be looked for as a test of character and relationship to the Lord.

But there is another viewpoint given us in the Scriptures, and from it we may answer this question—Yes, Love is the only standard or test of relationship to the Lord and to the brethren. Let us elaborate. Gentleness, meekness and patience are indeed elements of the holy character, the holy mind, which the Lord will develop in us; but they are not the sum of this character which we call love. They are only twigs or branches, as it were, on the great tree of Christian faith and fellowship—twigs and branches which are duplicated to some extent on other trees and on other vines than that of "the Father's right hand planting."

In giving his command the Lord did not specify, first meekness, gentleness, etc., but, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul and strength." Hence the first test of relationship to the Lord is that of faithfulness to him and to his Word. "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."—Isa. 8:20.

So, then, in looking for Christian brotherhood we should begin at the beginning and look for loyalty to God and to our Lord and to the Gospel message and to the brethren. Meekness, gentleness, patience, etc., are commendable qualities in anyone, but they prove nothing of themselves. Does not the Apostle call attention to this when he says that some, with feigned words and smooth speeches, would make merchandise of you; that is to say, would use you for their own advantage, to prosper their own designs and ambitions? Is not this the same thought expressed by another Apostle who exhorts us that we should not love in word merely, but in deed and in truth? (1 John 3:18.) These words intimate that some do love merely in word—feigned words and smooth speeches. The real evidence of the sincerity or truthfulness of our love, as the Apostle points out, *is evidenced by our DEEDS and not merely by smooth words.* With the smooth words we should look for that zeal for God and for his Truth which would demonstrate its sincerity by looking out for and serving the interests of the Truth, by evident effort to control words and acts, in harmony with the interests of the Truth. Our Lord Jesus honored the Truth greatly when he made it identically himself, saying, "Me and my Word." *Whoever, therefore, honors not the Lord's Word, and serves it not, lacks that evidence of love for the Lord himself.*

The Lord puts the least of his disciples as his personal representative, assuring us that kindness done, or evil deeds done, or evil words spoken, in respect to the least of his followers, are counted as said or done to himself. Whoever vows to love the Lord with all his heart, mind, being and strength and to be zealous for his service will of necessity be on the lookout for the Lord's brethren, even the least of them—to honor them, to serve them—and certainly not to stumble them. Whoever, therefore, lends himself to stirring up strife and dissension in the Church, which is the Body of Christ, furnishes this evidence that he has not the Lord's Spirit; that he is "none of his"; that whatever smooth speeches and honeyed words he may use are merely deceptions and do not make known, but on the contrary hide the real sentiments of his heart.

In addition to the honeyed words and smooth speeches some add honeyed deeds and little attentions, in order that they may have the better opportunity for injecting the poison of asps, which is under their lips. (Rom. 3:13.) These honeyed words and deeds are the baits behind which is fastened the hook of slander, evil-speaking, evil insinuations, etc., by which they foster discord and stir up anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife and other works of the flesh and the devil.

How dwelleth the love of God in these? How love these the Lord with all their heart, mind, soul and strength and their neighbor as themselves? NOT AT ALL. They are in the very gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity, as the Apostle declares—however they may measurably deceive their followers AND THEMSELVES to the contrary.

It is for each of God's people to be so filled with his holy spirit with love for the Lord and for all the glorious attributes of his character—that he will be proof against such tools of the Adversary and, so far from having fellowship with them he will instinctively shun them, even as the Scriptures declare. We are to "Love righteousness and hate iniquity" and to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." Rather we should reprove them, *not necessarily by word, but certainly by conduct, by having no fellowship with them,* because we are of another spirit, the spirit of life, the spirit of peace, the spirit of truth, the spirit of brotherhood, the spirit of the Lord.—Z. '09, 285-287.

BLESSING GOD AND CURSING MEN

"But the tongue can no man tame: It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father, and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be." James 3:8-10.

. . . The Apostle is addressing the CHURCH, let us consider the astounding statement of our text, and seek to ascertain in what sense it should be understood; resolving that, should we find that in any sense or degree it applies to us individually, we will assuredly respond quickly to the spirit's teaching, and correct so evil a condition.

CHRISTIANS WHO CURSE MEN WITH THEIR TONGUES.

We may readily see how the Apostle means that God's people bless or praise his name with their tongues. They do so in prayer; they do so in their hymns of praise; they do so in declaring his Truth, and in witnessing to his providences on their behalf. In a word, we bless God with our tongues by showing forth his praises, who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

But in what sense does the Apostle mean that Spiritual Israelites *curse men* with their tongues, and that so commonly, so generally prevalent as to require public reproof? Surely no Christian curses his fellow-man by oaths and profane swearing! But are there not other ways in which our tongues may be a *curse* and an *injury* to fellow-men? We are to remember that the meaning of our English word "curse" has somewhat altered in common usage within the last century, having very generally lost the sense of *injury* and assumed wholly the sense of swearing, profanity. In the Greek language different words are used when referring to a cursing oath, *viz., anathema, and anathematiso,* used ten times in the New Testament; and when referring to a spoken condemnation as a blight of curse, *viz., katara* and *kataraomai,* which signify condemnation, to speak against, to speak evil of, to injure. The latter is the word used by the Apostle James; hence his language really is—With the same tongue wherewith we praise and honor God, we do injury to fellow-men, by evil-speaking, slandering, etc. . . .

Having thus before our minds the real word, and its signification as used by the Apostle, we see that while *curse* is a proper enough translation of the original, the whole difficulty is that present-day common usage and common education have largely hidden from sight this signification of the word. Similarly the word *evil* has lost its original breadth of meaning, and is almost invariably considered to signify immorality, badness, wickedness; whereas in its breadth of meaning it may be used to refer to anything that is undesirable, not good, such as calamities, etc.

NO EVIL TO WHICH THE LORD'S PEOPLE ARE MORE EXPOSED.

Looking at the Apostle's statement from this standpoint, we see clearly that his charge is applicable to Christian people of today to an alarming extent. How many there are who do injury with their tongues to their fellow-creatures, who use the same tongue in offering praise to God. *We know of no evil to which God's consecrated people are more exposed than to this one.* With many it is as natural to gossip as to breathe. They do it unconsciously. We have even known people who took cognizance of the Scriptural injunction against slander and evil-speaking who were so utterly confused on the subject, and so unaware of their own conduct that they would declare their horror of speaking a slander in the very same breath in which they utter slanders. We mention this in proof *that this evil is so ingrained in fallen human nature* as to elude the notice of the new nature sometimes for years—and thus escapes the correction in righteousness which the Lord's Word directs, and which all who are truly the Lord's people desire.

Many are the peculiar subterfuges which the fallen nature will use, in its attempt to stifle the voice of conscience, and yet maintain the use of this channel of evil —long after it has been driven from evil practices which are less common, less popular, more generally recognized as sinful.

(1) It will say, I mean no harm to anybody; but I must have something to talk about, and nothing would be so interesting to friends and neighbors as something which has more or less of a gossipy flavor (scandal) connected with it. But is evil-speaking, slander, any the more proper on this account for the children of the light? By no means. Hence it is that the Scriptures instruct us, "Let your conversation be such as becometh saints"; "Let your speech be with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man"; "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is *good,* to the use of *edifying,* that it may minister grace *unto the hearers."—Phil. 1:27; Col. 4:6; Eph. 4:29.*

But the scandal-monger, however refined his methods and words, well knows that so far from the scandal ministering grace to the hearer, it ministers evil; that the hearer is impelled by the forces of his fallen human nature to go quickly and tell the scandal further: true or false, he knows not and heeds not. It has kindled in his heart a flame of carnal sentiment which issues from his lips to "set on fire the course of nature" in others, similarly weak through the fall. The fallen nature feasts and revels in just such things, feeling the more liberty to do so because they delude themselves that thus they are moralizing—preaching against sin, and that in thus discussing and impliedly denouncing the *said-to-be* transgressions of another, they are mentioning matters abhorrent to their righteous souls. Alas! poor, weak, fallen humanity's reasonings are seriously defective when the Lord's counsels in righteousness are ignored. . . .

THE WAY TO GLORY, HONOR AND IMMORTALITY A NARROW WAY.

(2) That our Lord understood and taught that the way to glory, honor and immortality is a NARROW ONE is evident. "If any man would be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." And again—"Strive to enter in at the straight gate, for straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be who find it." . . .

. . . The Scriptures declare, in so many words, that the friendship of this world signifies enmity against God. (Jas. 4:4.) *God has purposely placed the matter in such a position that his people must take their choice, and lose either the Divine friendship and fellowship, or the worldly friendship and fellowship;* because those things which the Lord loves are distasteful to the worldly, and those things which the worldly love, evil deeds and evil thoughts, evil speaking, are an abomination in the sight of the Lord, and those who love and practice such things lose his fellowship—they are not of his Spirit. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."—Rom. 8:9.

(3) Another way by which some otherwise good Christian people avoid this question and justify themselves in this common fault of humanity, is by confining themselves (as they think) to the truth. But they never know how *frequently their gossip-loving natures pervert their judgment* and lead them to accept as truth things respecting which they have little or no knowledge. Nor are such anxious to know more, after they have circulated a slander with their stamp of verity on it. To find it untrue would prove them "false witnesses" and put them to trouble to correct the lie. The pride of the natural mind objects and refuses to believe the truth under such circumstances. Thus one evil leads to another.

HOW THE DEPRAVED TASTE HEDGES BEHIND CONSCIENCE.

Such will say, "Oh, I never tell anything for *truth* until I positively know it to be true—of my own observation, my own personal knowledge. Anything that I do not know of myself to be true I am always careful to so state, and say, I have heard thus and so, or, I am told thus and so; *I do not vouch for the truth of it myself.* Thus I am sure that I always avoid speaking evil of anyone." Perhaps there is no more common delusion on this subject than is thus expressed. The depraved taste hedges itself behind conscience, and declares that it is always right to speak the truth, and hence God cannot have meant that speaking the truth would be slander, but that in condemning evil-speaking and slander, as works of the flesh and the Devil, he must have meant the speaking of that which is false, untrue.

This is a great mistake. A slander is equally a slander, whether it is true or whether it is false, and is so regarded, not only in the law of God, but also in the law of civilized men. True, in human law, if a suit were brought for slander, if it were proven that the charges made by the slanderer had some basis of fact, that would probably be considered by the Court and jury an extenuating circumstance, and would probably very much reduce the amount of the verdict for damages. A slander is anything which is uttered with the intention of injury to another, whether true or false, and the laws of men agree with the law of God, that such injury to another is wrong.

In other words, Divine and human laws agree that a first wrong does not justify a second wrong. Human law says, If a wrong has been committed, the Courts are open to the injured one to seek redress or the punishment of the evil doer; but the injured one shall not be permitted to take the remedy into his own hands either by making an assault with physical force or by the use of the more subtle weapon, the tongue, to assassinate his reputation with the poisoned stiletto of envy and malice. . . .

THE LAW OF LOVE COMMANDS THAT WE "SPEAK EVIL OF NO MAN."

. . . The law of God, the Law of Christ, goes much further and deeper into such matters, naturally, than do the laws of men; for it deals not with men, but with the "new creatures in Christ Jesus"—transformed by the renewing of their minds, and under a special covenant relationship, and bound by the law of love, which "worketh no ill to his neighbor," under any circumstances, under any provocation, but, on the contrary, returns "good for evil," "blessing for cursing."

The Law of Love commands *silence* to all who acknowledge that law and the Law-Giver, saying "*Speak evil of no man.*" (Titus 3:2.) It goes further than this and declares against evil thoughts, evil suspicions, evil surmisings against neighbors. It declares that love filling our hearts will not only hinder evil conduct and injurious words, but will even prevent evil thoughts—"*Love thinketh no evil.*" The new creature possessing it can be convinced of evil only by indisputable proofs. Indeed, to impress this subject and its importance in his sight, the Great Teacher declares to the pupils in his school—With what judgment ye judge others, I will judge you. (Matt. 7:1.) And again he tells them to pray to the Father—"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." (Matt. 6:12.) Again he declares. If *at heart* ye treasure up resentment against others, the Heavenly Father will not forgive you.—Matt. 18:35.

Ah! indeed, a Christian after the Lord's pattern, a graduate of the school of Christ and prepared to teach others, is one who not only outwardly, but inwardly also, is clean—separated, washed by the water of Divine instruction, from the meanness, the filthiness of the flesh. He is no longer the slave of sin, controlled by the desires and weaknesses of his fallen flesh and its spirit of the world, bearing fruits unto unrighteousness—anger, malice, hatred, strife, slander, evil-speaking. (Col. 3:8; 1 Peter 2:1, 2.) From his high standpoint of appreciation of the Divine law, the advanced Christian sees that in the Lord's sight hatred is *murder,* slander is *assassination,* and the destruction of a neighbor's good name is *robbery* and rapine. And any of these things done in the Church among the professed people of God, *IS DOUBLY EVIL*—the assassination and robbery of a *brother.*—Compare 1 John 3:15 and Matt. 5:21, 22.

THE NATURAL HEART IS DECEITFUL AND DESPERATELY WICKED.

To utter a defamatory or injurious remark against another, and then to add, "I do not know whether it is true or not," is to show that the speaker is exercised by an evil spirit and not by the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of love—he wishes to injure or curse his fellow-creature, is anxious to do so. He would feel restrained to some extent from telling what he knew to be absolutely untrue, but delights to speak evil, and is glad to know that he may roll it as a sweet morsel over his tongue, and hence speaks of even those scandals which he *does not know to be true,* and attempts to excuse himself with such an apology as the above.

Verily, it is with force that the Scriptures declare that the natural heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Those who thus speak, and thus attempt to justify their misconduct, have either never entered the school of Christ, or are as yet only in the infant class, and do not know that theirs is the spirit of murder, and not the spirit of brotherly love. Oh! that all true Christians might learn the scope of this law of Love, in its relationship not only to God, but also to fellow-men; what a bridling of tongues it would mean, what a carefulness of speech! As David said, "I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue." And he who watches his tongue is putting a detective upon his deceitful heart and can the better know it and master it, for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."—Jer. 17:9; Psa. 39:1; Matt. 12:34.

The only exception to this rule, "Speak evil of no man," would come in where we might know of an absolute necessity for making known an evil—where the relating of the evil would be contrary to our heart's wishes, and only mentioned because of necessity—because of love for others who, if not informed, might be injured. For instance, the law of the land demands that, if we know of murder having been committed, it shall not be considered slander, but on the contrary be considered duty, to make known to the proper officers of the law the *facts* (not suspicions) which have come under our observation. Likewise, if we knew of some weakness in a brother or sister, and realized that another brother or sister was about to be placed in a dangerous position by reason of that weakness, it might become our duty to make known, either to the individual or congregation liable to be injured, so much of our knowledge of *facts* (not suspicions) as might be necessary to guard against injury through the weakness mentioned. But this would not be speaking evil, but on the contrary would be speaking with a good motive, with the intention of preserving the one party from extraordinary temptation, and of preserving the other party from injury. And before anything should be said on the subject we should most positively satisfy our own consciences that our motive in speaking is a good one, and not an evil one; that we are about to use our tongue to bless, and not to injure. And even then, prompted by the spirit of love and kindness toward the weak brother, as well as toward the others, we should avoid mentioning one solitary item that would not be necessary to the object in view.

"DOTH A FOUNTAIN SEND FORTH AT THE SAME OPENING BITTER WATER AND SWEET?"

But some will object to limiting this liberty to cases of positive *knowledge,* and urge that absolute knowledge generally being small little could be said. We answer that this is in line with the Divine law—"Love thy neighbor *as thy self.*" You would not want your neighbor to use brain and tongue in evil surmises and slander against you; and you should not do so to him. The law of the land does not demand that you should tell one word more than you *know* (of personal knowledge) against your neighbor; it does not ask your suspicions and evil surmisings. And on the contrary, the law of the Lord commands that all under the law of love shall not utter one solitary suspicion against a neighbor; and that if suspicion beyond knowledge is *forced* upon the mind by associated circumstances, the new mind shall promptly, with its native benovelence, counterbalance the suspicions by suggestions of the possibility of misinformation or misinterpretation and always give the apparently guilty the benefit of the doubt.

Another will object—"Oh! I could never waste so much time in getting at *facts.* Life is too short! Why, I would have no time at all left for my own business, if I carefully hunted up the *facts* so as always to speak from *knowledge* and never from hearsay!"

Just so! and the lesson to you should be to follow the Scriptural rule—"Speak evil of no man!"

(1) Because you have not the time to get at the facts, and quite probably also lack the ability to judge impartially, if you had *all* the facts before you.

(2) Because, if you have the Spirit of Christ, love, dwelling in you richly, you will prefer to tell no one the facts, even if you have the chain of evidence complete. You will loathe the matter the more in proportion as the known facts are unfavorable. What, then, must be the condition of those who have itching ears for scandal and

of those whose tongues delight in scandal as a sweet morsel, and are anxious to scatter an evil report of which they have no knowledge—only prejudiced hearsay? The most generous view possible of such is that they have *little* of the Spirit of Christ; that they are deficient in brotherly love and have never truly learned "the golden rule."

The Apostle inquires, "Doth a fountain send forth at the same opening bitter water and sweet?" The form of his question implies the answer, No; it is either good water only, or brackish water only. He evidently wishes to suggest that we apply the same rule to our hearts and mouths: How is it possible if our hearts have been renewed that our mouths utter loving sweetness to God, and bitter acrimony, envy, hatred, strife, towards or respecting our fellow-men?

THE TREASURE OF A NEW MIND IN AN EARTHEN VESSEL.

There is but one way of understanding the foregoing question Scripturally. It is expressed by the Apostle Paul (2 Cor. 4:7), "We have this treasure (the new heart, the new mind, the new nature) in an earthen vessel." Not that Christians are of two natures, for that thought is contrary to the science of the Bible. No mixture of natures can be recognized; hence it was that our human natures were justified through faith in Jesus' blood and a renouncement of sin and a consecration to death, that instead we might have spiritual natures and become "new creatures, in Christ Jesus." The new creature, however, is as yet only in embryo, possessing only the new mind which dwells in and proposes to regulate and govern the mortal bodies, which are considered dead so far as the will of the flesh is concerned.

When, therefore, our mouths are speaking forth heartfelt praise to God, who hath blessed us, lifted our feet from the horrible pit, and the miry clay, and placed us upon the Rock Christ Jesus and has put a new song into our mouth, our praise implies that the new mind is controlling at such a time, that the new heart is overflowing in the mortal body, and going forth through the lips to the blessing and edification, the comfort and encouragement of those who hear. Thus the fountain in our heart is sending forth sweet waters, carrying with them life, blessing, refreshment. But when our tongues speak evil of any, *whether it be true or false,* it implies that the new nature is, temporarily at least, *overcome by the old nature;* it implies that another fountain is now operating and using the tongue, the mouth, in issuing forth the words of malice or hatred or envy or strife or reproach or evil-speaking of any kind—cursing or injuring others in any degree, great or small.

This implies that the flesh is not being kept under, kept dead, kept buried, kept out of sight. Such a condition, therefore, implies slow spiritual development *or retrogression*—falling away on the part of the "new creature." All such should remember, as the Apostle Paul declares, "The time past of our lives sufficeth us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles." Again, he says, "Yield not your members as instruments of unrighteousness; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."—1 Pet. 4:3; Rom. 6:13.

"PURGE OUT THE OLD LEAVEN."

From this point of view we may console ourselves if, in looking backward, we perceive that in our own cases from the same mouth has proceeded praise to God and injury and defamation and slander and evil-speaking, or any of these evil propensities, toward our fellow-creatures. It does not, therefore, prove that our hearts were not truly justified, and sanctified by the holy Spirit of adoption; it does not prove that we are not sons of God and partakers of his Spirit. It does prove, however, that we are in a sadly improper condition—spiritually sick and in need of taking a purgative; as the Apostle expresses it, "Purge out, therefore, the old leaven (malice, etc.), that ye may be a new (unadulterated, pure) lump" or loaf—proper representatives of the Body of Christ.—1 Cor. 5:7.

We may know assuredly that, until the "new creature" gains a thorough victory over the flesh, we will not be winners of the great prize which is promised only "to him that overcometh." The overcoming, however, will be not in the *perfecting of the flesh,* but in the *perfecting of the heart*—the will, the intentions. As for the blemishes of the flesh, some of them, undoubtedly, despite every effort on our part to eradicate them, will continue with us so long as we are in the flesh. The perfection which is to be hoped for, therefore, and aimed at and expected and gained by the overcomers, is the perfection of the will, heart, intentions—"Blessed are the pure in heart; they shall see God." . . .

. . . The Apostle points out that there are two kinds of wisdom, a heavenly and an earthly, and that all of the Lord's people should discern these, and should see to it that theirs is the heavenly. The Apostle's intimation is that there may be some with the Church, who may have counted themselves in the Church, who may have associated themselves with the Church from worldly-wise motives—some who have caught sight of the fact that there is a reasonableness and a wisdom in the teachings of the Scriptures which they admire and which they can turn, perhaps, to their own advantage. These, he implies, will be inclined to be heady and to make a show of their wisdom, and to be "puffed up" by it, and while outwardly acknowledging the propriety of the Christian graces, brotherly-kindness, gentleness, meekness, patience, love, they have in their hearts bitter envyings and strife—strife to have name and fame—envying those who may seem to them to have more of these.

These, the Apostle intimates, will find it difficult, yea, *IMPOSSIBLE to avoid cursing* (speaking evil of, injuring) the brethren. It will be so natural to them to do so that they cannot avoid it, because they have not pure hearts—they have not regenerated hearts. If their hearts ever were regenerated, they have returned like the sow to wallowing in the mire—like the dog to his vomit. The Apostle's advice to such as find that they have in their hearts envious and bitter feelings, is that they have no cause to glory or to boast, but on the contrary should acknowledge that, having these evil conditions in the heart, they are not Christians at all, and they should cease to lie against the truth—cease to act fraudulently, hypocritically—cease to continue to claim to have renewed hearts, sanctified in Christ Jesus.

He tells such plainly that their wisdom, their knowledge, is not of God, is not of the holy Spirit—"This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish; for, where envy and strife are, there is confusion and every evil work (to be anticipated)."—Jas. 3:15, 16.

It seems evident that although the Apostle James' denunciation applies to any professing to be Israelites indeed, he nevertheless is specially aiming his remarks at those who profess to be teachers in the Church, to have *wisdom* to a considerable degree. And his words remind us of the words of the Apostle Paul; when speaking of the various gifts distributed to the Church, he seemingly points out the dangers of those of large knowledge, and, as an illustration of this principle which James presents, he says:

"THOUGH I SPEAK WITH THE TONGUES OF MEN AND OF ANGELS AND HAVE NOT LOVE."

Though I could speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not Love, it would imply that I had become as a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal, making a noise indeed, but having no feeling respecting the matter myself—I have neither part nor lot with those who possess the Spirit of Christ. Although I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, and have not Love, I am nothing; and though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and give my body to be burned, and have not Love, it profiteth me nothing.—I Cor. 13:1-8.

Thus the Apostle points out distinctly that *knowledge and oratory are not the most vital tests*, but that Love, permeating the heart and extending out through all the course of life, and actuating and operating our mortal bodies, is the real test—the real proof of our Divine relationship. He points out that those who had received gifts of God before they had come into a proper relationship to God might become sounding brass and tinkling cymbals, and thus become "nothing," if they lose the love, if they lose the Spirit of Christ; for "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

It is well for the Lord's people to take particular note of these Divine instructions from two of the chiefest of the Apostles, and to remember that, valuable though they be, neither *oratory* nor *knowledge* is to be considered amongst the "brethren" as sure proofs of their being in the right way, nor that their influence might not be injurious instead of helpful. The *LEADING characteristic to be looked for in everyone accepted as a servant of the Church, to minister in holy things, should be first of all the spirit of LOVE*. We do not mean to say that knowledge and ability should be entirely ignored, but we do mean to say that these should be considered of secondary and not of primary importance, as is always the tendency.

Select from among yourselves, holy men, full of the holy Spirit, that they may have the charge of the spiritual interests of the different companies of the Lord's people. And for a Divine explanation of how this holy Spirit will manifest itself, of the qualities, therefore, that are to be looked for in the servants of the Church, see 1 Cor. 13:4-8; also 1 Pet. 1:22, 23; 2 Pet. 1:1-13. For their own good, as well as or the good of the Church, all who, having other qualifications, give evidence of being puffed up and of desiring to lord it over God's heritage (the Church), or who manifest envy, strife, bitterness, evil-speaking—these should be passed by, as giving evidence of having the wrong spirit, that cometh not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. They are unsafe teachers, and are likely to do more harm than good, with whatever knowledge they may possess.

"THE WISDOM THAT COMETH FROM AROVE," ETC.

Continuing, the Apostle leaves no doubt respecting his meaning, for he distinctly outlines the course and fruitage of heavenly wisdom, saying, "The wisdom that is from above is first pure"—truthful, honest, sincere, not put on, not used as a garment of light to deceive and to cover up selfishness, malice, hatred, strife; it makes no compromises with sin, impurity, in any shape or form.

It is "peaceable."—So far from being a quarrelsome bickering disposition, the "new mind" desires peace; it will "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints," but it will not contend simply from a love of contention, a love of strife; on the contrary, the new mind is peaceably inclined, would prefer, so far as possible, to yield a non-essential point in a controversy; it loves its opponents and sympathizes with their difficulties.

It is "gentle"—not rude or coarse, not rough in action or word of tone; and if the earthen vessel through which it speaks have these rudenesses ingrained by nature, the "new Nature" regrets them, strives against them, and seeks to conquer them; and where they do injury to others is ready, willing, glad to apologize, and to remove the smart.

It is "easy to be entreated"—easy of approach, not haughty, not disdainful, not hard or cruel; yet IT IS FIRM ON MATTERS OF PRINCIPLE; PRINCIPLES CANNOT BE BENDED OR MODIFIED; THEY BELONG TO GOD. But while affirming the principles, this spirit of wisdom points out its own willingness to moderation, by acknowledging any good features in its opponent, and by pointing out the reason why no modification is possible in relation to Divine laws and principles.

It is "full of mercy and good fruits."—It delights in all things prompted by love and kindness; it takes pleasure in doing for others; it takes pleasure, not only in showing mercy to dumb animals under its care, but it especially delights in mercy in dealing with brethren in respect to their faults. It is merciful also in the family—not over-exacting, but generous, kind, benevolent. It is generous also with opponents, and those who are contentious—not wishing to push a victory, even for the truth, to such a point as would be injurious, hurtful, unmerciful to the antagonist.

It is "without partiality."—It loves the good, the true, where these are found; and opposes the untrue, the impure and the unholy, whether found amongst friends or enemies. Its justice is of the strictest kind, tempered with mercy; it will not approve a fault in a brother because he is a brother, but would reprove the same with gentleness and meekness, remembering the liability of all to the assaults of the world, the flesh and the Devil. It will not fail to see a virtue in an enemy, nor hesitate to acknowledge it. Truth is its standard, not prejudice, not partyism, not sectarianism.

It is "without hypocrisy."—It is thoroughly candid; it needs not to feign love, because it is love; it needs not to put on a kindly exterior and to smother feelings of wrath and envy and strife, for it is without envy, without strife. Such works of the flesh and of the Devil have, by the grace of God, been seen to be earthly, sensual, devilish, and have been repudiated, and the heart has been justified, cleansed, sanctified to God, renewed in thought, intention, will, and is now full of the treasure of the holy Spirit.

With these thoughts before our minds, let us all, dear readers, more earnestly than ever, guard against the old nature, and its insidious attempts to gain control over our tongues. Let us, more and more, seek to appreciate, in ourselves and in others, this heavenly wisdom, whose operation is so forcefully presented by the Apostle. The more important our members, the more influential, the more earnestly ought we strive to keep them in full subjection to the Lord, as *his* servants. Our feet are useful members, consecrated to the Lord; we may use them in many errands of mercy, to the glory of his name and to the profit of his people. Our hands are likewise useful, if thoroughly consecrated to the Lord's service. Our ears are also useful in his service, to hear for him, to refuse to hear the evil, and thus to approve evil, and to set a good example to others. Our eyes are a great blessing from the Lord, and they also are to be kept from evil, from the lust of the eye and the pride of life, and are to be instruments or servants of righteousness, in seeing the good, in appreciating the good, and in assisting the good, and in helping us to know the will of our God.

"THE TONGUE SET ON FIRE OF GEHENNA."

But of all our members the most influential is the tongue. The tongue's influence exceeds that of all our other members combined. To control it, therefore, in the Lord's service, is the most important work of the Lord's people in respect to their mortal bodies and the service of these rendered to the Lord. A few words of love, kindness, helpfulness—how often have such changed the entire course of a human life! Yea! How much they have had to do with moulding the destiny of nations! And how often have evil words, unkind words, slanderous words, done gross injustice, assassinated reputations, etc.! As the Apostle declares, the tongue is capable of setting on fire the whole course of nature—awakening passions, strifes, enmities, at first unthought of. No wonder he declares such tongues "set on fire of *Gehenna*"—the Second Death!

The public servants of the Church are tô some extent specially its *"Tongues,"* and what an influence they wield for good or for evil, in the blessing and upbuilding of the Lord's people, or for their injury—cursing! How necessary that all the tongue-servants of the Lord's Body be such, and such only, as are of his spirit! Their influence not only extends to those who are in the Church, but in considerable measure they are mouthpieces heard outside. And the same principle applies to every individual member of the Church, in his use of his member, his tongue. He may use it wisely or unwisely, with heavenly wisdom or with earthly wisdom. He may use it for strife, and tearing down the faith and character of the brethren, in overthrowing love and confidence, or he may use it in building up these graces of the Spirit.

How many have proved the truth of the Apostle's words—that the tongue has great possibilities for defiling the whole Body, the Church, and setting on fire the course of nature, by stirring up the evil passions and propensities of the fallen nature! How few amongst the Lord's people have conquered the tongue to the extent of bringing it into subjection to the will of God, that they may minister good, AND ONLY GOOD, to all with whom they come in contact! Let us, dearly beloved, be fully resolved that by Divine grace (promised to assist us) we shall witness great progress in our control of this most important member of our bodies, bringing the same into full subjection and obedience and service to the King of kings and Lord of lords—to him "who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light."—Z. '10, 339-345.

QUIETNESS IN THE MIDST OF STORMS

"When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" Job 34:29.

Elihu, the speaker of these words, was a young man who lived in Job's day—supposedly in the time of Abraham. He was one of the four friends of Job who called upon him in his adversity to comfort him. Being the youngest of all, he hesitated to speak as freely as did the other three friends of Job. He had heard them speak, and had discerned where they had made mistakes.

The fact that certain words are recorded in the Bible does not necessarily mean that they are inspired of God or even that they are true. We remember having in our youth a discussion with someone who finally quoted us a passage of Scripture which seemed to be in conflict with all the other Scriptures. We said, "If that is Scripture, we would like to know it." Our opponent looked it up and found that it read, "And the Devil said" so and so. Surely there is no reason to believe that the Devil is inspired—no reason to believe that the Devil's words are inspired.

These words spoken by Elihu were as wise as any spoken by Job's comforters—probably wiser; but they were surely human wisdom, so far as we can discern. When Elihu put this question, "When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" he was seeking to draw a line in this criticism of Job, being averse to an extreme position, yet agreeing neither with Job nor his other friends. Job's three friends had been arguing that he must have done some very wicked deeds, and that as a result his camels and his cattle were destroyed—in fact, all of his property, everything he possessed, as well as his children. He had lost all his ten children and lost also the affection of his wife. And these comforters were trying to have him *admit* that he had committed some great crime and that God was angry with him. Still Job insisted that he had been doing his very best—not that he claimed to be perfect, but he had been striving to live a godly life, a just and honorable life.

ELIHU'S SOUND REASONING.

So when Job had gotten through with his arguments and his three friends have gotten through with theirs, Elihu said (we paraphrase), "Job, you admit that you are in trouble. Now, if God had given you quietness, who could make you trouble? He has surely purposed that this trouble come upon you."

Elihu defended God. He claimed that the Lord had evidently designed that Job should not have peace and prosperity longer; otherwise these adversities could not have come upon him. Whatever was the reason for it, Job's calamity evidently was not accidental. There must have been a Divine hand in the matter. Even if Satan had sent all these difficulties and trials, he could not have done so unless God had permitted it. No one could have thwarted the Divine arrangement and will. Elihu contended with Job that the Lord had the right and the power to decide, that Job had not. He showed distinctly the Power and the rightful authority of God to order in all the affairs of life, and incidentally showed that Job was more righteous than all his associates; that while he was a sinner, yet not on this account was he being afflicted.

We may profitably get a thought from this discourse given by Elihu. Here is a process of reasoning used by a man away back in the past—about the time that the Evolutionists tell us man was a monkey. Pretty sound reasoning for a monkey! Many of our college presidents would do no better today. It is sound logic.

AFFLICTION NO PROOF OF GOD'S DISFAVOR.

We also see that Job was not a great sinner. On the contrary, we have every reason to believe that he was a true Prophet of God, a true servant of God. He was one whom the Bible tells us God especially loved. This is shown in Ezekiel 14:19, 20. "If I send a pestilence into that land, and pour out my fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast, though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live, said the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness." Again, the Apostle says, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy"—James 5:11.

It is quite true that Job's trouble could not have come upon him if God had not permitted it. If God had wished him to have quietness, no one could have made him trouble. But he permitted trial to come to test His servant, just as He permits trouble to come upon His Church and as he permitted it to come upon His well-beloved Son. He permitted that men should do all manner of evil against His Son—should scoff at Him, should spit upon Him, should smite Him, should scourge Him, and finally crucify Him. The Lord has not always given quietness in these cases, but often trouble.

The lesson of the text for those who have put themselves in God's care, is that *no one can make trouble without Divine permission.* The Lord tells us that during this Gospel Age He will make all things work together for good to His children, and that He will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear. (I Corinthians 10:13.) In our Lord's case it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him, to allow suffering and death to come upon Him. (Isa. 53.10.) It pleased God to adopt this Plan for the recovery of the world, because it best illustrates His justice, His Wisdom, His Love and His Power. It also resulted in great honor and glory to our Lord Jesus.

As concerns the Lord's people, there might be certain matters relating to dispensational changes that could best be accomplished through severe trials coming upon them. Then, additionally, God wishes certain trials to come upon His people because He desires them to *trust* Him where they cannot *trace* Him. He wishes them to have unwavering faith in Him. The children of God, then, can take these words of our text in a very different way from that originally suggested to Job by Elihu. We may truly say, "When God giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" We recognize that there is a certain quietness and rest of heart that all the Lord's saints may enjoy. We realize this even when He permits severe trouble.

The Apostle Paul, in His Epistle to the Hebrews, says, "We who have believed do enter into rest." We enter into rest by coming into the attitude where we can believe, where we can and do exercise ENTIRE TRUST IN GOD. Sometimes outward difficulties are helpful in overcoming a wrong spirit. The Lord's people are not discouraged by the things that would utterly crush out the vitality and courage of others. They get the wrong spirit pounded out of them; but it is the hand of love that administers the blows, and the Lord knows just how many and how severe ones are needed.

KEPT IN PERFECT PEACE.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee." (Isa. 26:3.) This thought is very precious to us as New Creatures. "The peace of God which passeth all understanding," is to rule and keep our minds and hearts. (Phil. 4:7.) We are to count the things of the present life as not worthy of comparison with the glories of eternity. And so the Apostle says, "For our light afflictions which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor. 4:17, 18.) When our minds are stayed on the Lord, and we take the proper view of our experiences, we can sing with the poet:

"No storm can shake our inmost calm,
While to this refuge clinging."

We have peace, no matter what outward conditions may be. The trials and difficulties of life come to the Lord's people co-mingled with joys—the rain and storm, then the sunshine. They enjoy all righteous pleasures that are in harmony with their consecration. They learn to cultivate patience in trial, knowing that patience works out experience, and experience works out more and more that hope which maketh not ashamed.—Rom. 5:3-5.

So, then, it is to the Christian that our text brings the assurance that when God gives quietness, none can make trouble. They "shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake," said the Master, but *then* we are to "rejoice and be exceeding glad." "Let not your heart be troubled." (Matt. 5:11; John 14:1.) We think our text very precious when viewed from our standpoint.

TROUBLE NECESSARY TO OUR PROVING.

Our Heavenly Father designs that various kinds of trouble shall come upon us, that these may develop and prove our characters. It is a part of the Divine Plan to permit us to have experiences of affliction. (Psa. 119:67, 71, 75; 34:19, 20.) So when we see God's people in trouble or trial today, we are not to say that God is against them. We are each to demonstrate our willingness to suffer according to His will, and often to suffer unjustly. Our Lord set us an example of cheerful, patient submission to God's will. We are to walk in His footsteps. And we have the example of the Apostles, when trials and difficulties and persecutions came upon them; and the example of other saints all down the Age.

Trouble is not necessarily a sign of the disfavor of God. On the contrary, we know that "many are the afflictions of the righteous," and that "*All* that will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall* suffer persecution." The *Truth* will cost them something. *Faithfulness to the Lord* will cost them much. As the Apostle says, "If ye be without chastisement (discipline, training), then are ye bastards and not sons." (Heb. 2:8.) *If God gives peace of heart, who can upset the one who is thus in harmony with God, in whom this peace of heart is ruling? This, then, is the greatest blessing of all.* And He grants this peace to those who are faithfully striving to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. We have a Refuge which none but His own can know. No harm can reach us within this Shelter; no storm can shake us from our moorings, for we are securely anchored to the Rock of Ages. "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to the called according to His Purpose." (Rom. 8:28.) And as Job's *after* blessing far outweighed his brief trials, so it will be with the Lord's saints today.

"What though my joys and comfort die!
The Lord, my Savior, liveth;
What though the darkness gather round!
Songs in the night He giveth.
No storm can shake my inmost calm,
While to that Refuge clinging;
Since Christ is Lord of Heaven and earth,
How can I keep from singing?
—Z. '16, 101, 102.

"In the furnace God may prove thee,
Thence to bring thee forth more bright
But will never cease to love thee;
Thou are precious in His sight."
—Z. '11, 462.

OUR WEDDING GARMENTS

Apparently many of the Jewish customs connected with marriage were so ordered by the Lord as to be typical of matters connected with the marriage of the Church to Christ. The Jewish maiden was betrothed to her intended husband by her father, or some substitute for him. Her father stipulated the conditions as between her and the bridegroom. When these were signed she was considered "espoused." The bridegroom came about a year later to receive his betrothed one and thereby to make her his bride, and to install her in the home as his joint-heir. St. Paul applies this matter to the Church, telling us that we have been "espoused" to one husband, which is Christ, our Beloved, our Lord. He has gone to prepare a place for us and will come again and receive us unto himself, and make us his joint-heirs in his kingdom. Then "the Spirit and the Bride will say, Come . . . and take of the Water of Life freely." For all the families of the earth, the river of the Water of Life will then flow.

One of our Lord's parables took note of the fact that when a kingly bridegroom brought home his bride, he expected that all of his servants would be more than ever on the alert to welcome him and to honor him—intent to note the first sound of his approach and to open immediately when he should knock. Our Lord used this to illustrate how awake all of his true disciples should be, that at his Second Coming, they might not be asleep and overcharged with the cares of this life, but hear the knock—the testimony of the Scriptures respecting the times and seasons and manner of his Second Presence in the harvest of this age. We remember the precious promise given to all of the Lord's followers who would be found thus awake and alert: their Lord would become their servant. He would cause them to sit down to meat—to enjoy a spiritual feast. He would gird himself as a servant and serve them with rich dainties. How we have seen this parable in process of fulfillment during the past thirty years. The knocking has been heard by one and another of the Lord's true servants. Those awake have heard, have discerned his presence, his *parousia*. And all such have experienced the blessing promised—the Master has become the servant. The servants are seated at his table and are being bountifully fed with rich spiritual food, such as never before was tasted, and such as they were not aware he had provided.

The parable of the wedding garment illustrates another feature of Truth from another standpoint. It was the customs at weddings that all the guests, as they entered the house, should be handed a wedding garment. The acceptance of this implied that they would put it on and wear it. (Matt. 22:1-13.) The parable shows how one, representing probably a class, rejecting the wedding garment furnished him, was expelled.

Interpreting the parable: Coming to the door, desiring to enter in, would imply faith in respect to the marriage. The robe would represent justification; the imputation of Christ's righteousness shows that all who would be acceptable at the wedding must appear in the imputed righteousness of Christ, and not in their own more or less filthy garments of imperfection and unrighteousness. But surely this garment represented something more than mere justification, else why should it be called a "wedding garment"? These garments were not provided for the public in general but merely for those who had been invited to the wedding and who had accepted the invitation and were desirious of entering in on the terms and conditions of the host. Applying this we see that God is not supplying justification to the world in general, nor to believers in general, but merely to such believers as accept the terms and conditions attaching to the marriage supper arrangements.

We might assume that all believers were invited to this feast and that all the invited ones were informed that wedding garments were provided for them, but that only those who accepted the invitation and actually came to the wedding and entered in through the door were actually given the wedding robes. Applied, this would mean that all believers were informed respecting the merit of Christ's sacrifice and its sufficiency for them as a covering for all their blemishes and as making them acceptable at the wedding feast if, leaving sin and worldly business and pleasure, they would come as guests to the wedding. The promise and tender of the wedding garment was a promise of full justification from sin and a full imputation of restitution rights, but with the understanding that in order to be sharers of the heavenly blessings all earthly rights, earthly honors and talents, must be surrendered, must be buried, that the individual might be reckoned as a New Creature in the provided robe.

The coming of the guests to the door desiring to enter in to the festival, pictures our compliance with the Lord's call and willingness to sacrifice self and to have ourselves buried as old creatures that we might appear as New Creatures in the wedding garments. The acceptance of the garment and the putting of it on, therefore, symbolized that the individual had not only consecrated himself unto death, but that his consecration had been accepted and that henceforth he was a New Creature privileged to enter in and to participate in all the privileges and joys of the occasion. The point we wish specially to emphasize here is that the wedding garment in the parable represents MORE than merely justification—*it represents additionally sanctification or consecration,* to be dead with Christ; to suffer with him; to be baptized into his death; to drink of his cup. Only by such a consecration could anyone possibly have right to be at the great banquet, either as a member of the Bride class or as a member of the "great company," her companion.

If now we have clearly in mind the meaning of the wedding garment, what would be suggested by the taking of it off—its repudiation? Would not the rejection of the robe signify a rejection of the *consecration unto death*—the consecration to share in *his cup of sufferings*—the consecration to *suffer with him* and to be *dead with him?* Is it not a fact that all this must be included in the wedding garment symbol? Must it not represent ALL the sacrifice we covenanted when we accepted justification on condition that we would sacrifice our justified rights? Is not this our robe as New Creatures and not our robe as human beings?

Surely the "wedding garment" can be worn only by those who, as New Creatures, still have fleshly bodies, whose imperfections are covered by the robe. Surely none but New Creatures ever had on this wedding robe and surely no one ever became a New Creature, except by the full consecration of his earthly restitution rights, sacrificial, after the manner showed us by the Lord. So then, to take off the wedding garment would not signify merely the rejection of our Lord's merit as our Redeemer, our Ransomer, but it also would include specially the practical renouncing of the terms and conditions of *sacrifice,* on account of which we obtained the robe. Would it not seem, therefore, that a repudiation of membership in the body of Christ, a repudiation of our share in his cup and repudiation of our baptism into his death, might symbolically be represented as a taking off of the wedding garment?

Why anyone should wish to draw back from fellowship in the sufferings of Christ seems difficult to understand. Indeed, happy are we if our own loyalty and appreciation of the privilege is so great that we cannot understand the attitude of those who repudiate their Vow to suffer with him, to be *dead* with him, that they may also share in *his resurrection* and *live* with him, that they may also *reign* with him.—Z. '09, 360.

"A FRENZY OF DELUSION"

"For this cause God will send them a strong delusion (literally, a frenzy of delusion); that they may believe a lie—because they had not pleasure in the Truth." 1 Thess. 2:11.

Evidently these words of the Apostle were a prophesy concerning the present . . . time. Doubtless they apply primarily to the Church and will later apply also to Babylon and the unregenerate world. "Judgment must begin at the house of God."

St. Paul does not specify *what* lies will be believed and *which* truths will be unappreciated. We might particularize to some extent, but we believe that a disloyal condition of heart may be meant which would apply to every form of truth and correspondingly apply to various lies.

Is it not a fact, that a mind may become generally indifferent to principles of honesty in respect to thoughts and reasonings? And would not such a mind be very open to erroneous conclusions? Would not this apply to all the affairs of life, so that unkind, uncharitable thoughts would be entertained without an *honest* endeavor to sift them and to give the one accused the benefit of every doubt? Is not this generally the case amongst men and women today?

We believe that such injustice lies at the bottom of nearly all the troubles of the Church and the world. Few but the saintly are just—not to say merciful and generous in their interpretations of the words and deeds of others.

And now according to this prophesy we are come to the time when God will test all—or allow Satan to test the whole world with a *"frenzy of delusion"!* What may we not expect in the way of hasty and irrational conduct inspired by these delusions! Some may be so exercised in respect to the Truth—new and old; others may be influenced thus in respect to their personal, social, and political affairs.

It is this frenzy that is precipitating trouble, religious, financial and social, and leading on to the anarchy which is shortly, according to the Bible, to envelope and swallow our civilization in the indescribable time of trouble which will precede the reign of righteousness.

The saints, the consecrated, will not escape from this testing. WHO WILL BE ABLE TO STAND? Some seem to be under the strain already. Let us pity them and do all in our power to succor them. But OUR CHIEF CONCERN SHOULD BE OURSELF—that we may each maintain and increase our "spirit of a sound mind."

What then should be our course if we would stand the test successfully?

We should not only square our every act and word with strictest justice, but beyond this we should scrutinize our every *thought* and "bring every thought into subjection to the will of God" as expressed in Christ. Love, do you say? Yes! in its proper order, "Love is the principle thing." But Justice must come first to be in line with the Divine precepts. "Just before generous" is an old and very true adage. After learning to think justly of the words and acts of others we are prepared with a proper mental foundation to think generously—lovingly.

The Scriptures say not in vain that "A false balance is an abomination unto the Lord." (Prov. 11:1.) And this balancing applies as truly to mental as to physical dealings with others. Whoever does not love righteousness; yea, whoever does not *hate inequity* is surely in danger of being frenzied by delusions in this evil today. . . . Let us be forewarned and "watch and pray lest we enter into temptation."—Z. '09, 344.

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

. . . We offer the suggestion that everywhere, so far as possible, the Vow be read daily, by everyone who has taken it, either publicly at the breakfast table, for instance; or individually and privately. We are assured that there is a blesing in it.—Z. '09, 59.

The principle of Truth is honesty, and it effects not only our words, but all of the conduct of life; yea, and also our thoughts.—Z. '09, 27.

How diligently, then, we should watch our hearts, our thoughts, that they be honest, true, truthful, in every sense and particular.—Z. '09, 27.

. . . Whoever most zealously co-operates with God receives proportionately the larger share of the Divine blessing.—Z. '13, 170.

Only with the FEW is God *First.* Only with the FEW is there a spirit of full consecration to do the Divine will. —Z. '11, 106.

We are looking at the present time, not for the things that are seen—the earthly applause and glory—but for the Heavenly Glory—for the things that the Lord has promised to those that love Him.—2 Cor. 4:17, 18. Z. '13, 121.

It is worth while here for us to learn a lesson to the effect that it is NEVER good policy to sacrifice our religious interests for our temporal interests. With all Christians the motto should be "God First."—Z. '15, 23.

It is indeed no easy matter to tread the pathway of humility to continually check the human aspirations, and to keep the sacrifice on the altar until it is fully consumed. —Z. '13, 57.

The way that the Lord has been marking out for His people all down through the Age has been a *narrow way*—*A VERY NARROW WAY.* His light is given only to those who are seeking—those who are waiting—those who are watching. These will 'discern the dawning of the morning.—Z. '13, 181.

Just as soon as the sealing of the saints is completed, *just as soon as all the elect are thus marked, just as soon* as this Age shall be completed, then those four angels who are holding the four winds, that they should not blow upon the earth, will let them loose.—Z. '11, 359.

Those who have accepted the control of Christ over their affairs are not at liberty to act as they will. They are to be controlled by His Word, and to walk according to his rules.—Z. '11, 166.

Applying this PRINCIPLE OF JUSTICE to our words, it means that we should not speak evil of either friend or foe; that we should not even insinuate evil. It means that we should not tell unnecessarily what we know to be the truth, if it would harm our neighbors, disparage him and discredit him in the eyes of others. It means that we should love our neighbor and his interests as we love our own, and should defend his interests and guard them as carefully as we would our own.—Z. '11, 154.

"As a man thinketh, so is he." If he thinks unkindly, ungenerously, unjustly, he will find it impossible always to avoid unkind, unjust, unloving words or actions. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." It follows, then, that to do justly signifies absolute righteousness in thought, in word, in conduct. Of this none of us is capable. The nearest approach to this is the perfect or just intention of the heart, covenanted by all those who become followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.—Z. '11, 154, 155.

All who hope to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord . . . . MUST watch as well as pray, they MUST "STAND FAST in the faith" against *the various oppositions of the world, the flesh and the* Adversary. They MUST acquit themselves like men, "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might."—Z. '11, 413.

We have no fault to find with the CHRONOLOGY, nor with the prophetic periods built upon it, as already presented to our readers in STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. We would not know how to improve on the statements therein presented if the books were to be written today.—Z. '11 5.

The Lord does not intend us to go through life in a careless manner, happy-go-lucky, so to speak. We are to have a proper thought for the day. What are the responsibilities of today? What are the cares? . . . We are to have a great deal of zeal. We are not to worry over things that may happen tomorrow, but have faith that God will be with us tomorrow, and give grace sufficient for us when it shall come. If the Lord's people are living faithfully, they will have a great deal to think about every day. They will not need to go out in advance to worry about tomorrow. We shall have plenty to do if we give attention to the present difficulties, and go to the Throne of Grace that we may obtain grace and strength to help today.—Z. '11, 345.

Where fervent love rules in the heart it implies that the heart is *fully submitted* to the Lord, and that means that nine-tenths of the battle is already won. But even then, as the Apostle Jude says (Jude 21), we must *keep ourselves* in the love of God, in watchfulness and prayer and zeal; and grace will abound where love abounds.—Z. '11, 205.

We are not to expect these leaders astray in the Church to be moral lepers, reprobates. Assuredly Satan would be too wise to use such as his tools, knowing that he could effect his purposes better through those who outwardly, at least, would be moral and religious. Notice that the Apostle did not say reprobate as respects morals, but reprobates as respects the faith. It does not say men of corrupt morals but does *SAY MEN OF CORRUPT MINDS —MEN WHOSE MINDS HAVE BECOME PERVERTED, CHANGED, ALTERED, AS RESPECTS THE TRUTH.* He who does not see any fulfillment of this prophecy and who yet believes that we are living in the close of the Gospel Age should certainly at once begin to look for them and endeavor to locate them.—Z. '09, 221.

Remember also the Apostle's words, "Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." (Eph. 6:13.) He pictures the armor, the protection that would be granted to a certain class—the helmet, the breastplate, the shield, the sword of the spirit. He expressly indicated that these defences would be provided for "the evil day" with which our age would close. He specially advised that while this armor was available to all of God's people and to be had for the putting on, nevertheless only those who will put it on will be safe. Why so, is it asked? We reply that this is one of God's tests by which he would prove our love, our devotion, our loyalty to him. Those of little love will be *careless respecting the details of the Divine Plan of the Ages.* "They will not have time" to search the Scriptures. They will not be disposed to make use of the agencies which God will use for providing this armament in this evil day.—Z. '09, 221.

FALLEN SPIRITS ESPECIALLY ACTIVE TODAY.

The fallen spirits have been very successful throughout the entire world in deluding and ensnaring humanity. The Lord advises His people that these spirits will be especially active and especially seductive in their methods of attack in the Harvest of this present Age. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the later times some shall depart from the faith (through) giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy." (1 Tim. 4:1, 2.) We are forewarned that this "hypocrisy" on the part of the seducing spirits consists of personating "angels of light" (2 Cor. 11:13, 14) and pretending to bring in "NEW LIGHT."—Z. '15, 342.

It is not possible to deceive and lead away those whose faith in God, through Christ, is fixed, who are trusting in the merit of Christ's great redeeming sacrifice, and whose hearts are wholly consecrated to the Lord and His service. Such shall "never fall"; but ALL OTHERS are to be separated from the faithful.—Z. '15, 342.

Some time ago our attention was especially called in a variety of ways to the fact that the fallen angels are coming into a greater degree of liberty than they have had since the flood and their condemnation to chains of darkness. All that we said respecting the probable materializations, counterfeiting both the dead and the living, *we still believe, and advise all to be on guard against.*—Z. '09, 59.

Each individual of the Lord's people must answer for his own course, to the Lord Himself. It therefore behooves all who are seeking Divine approval, to see to it that they are not influenced by the prevalent disposition to hypocrisy, but that they deal with the Lord in purity and honesty of heart. They should see to it that having covenanted to give to God and His service their all, they KEEP NOTHING BACK, but consider that their time, their influence, their means, their lives, are fully devoted to the Lord, and that they use these as His—as they believe He would wish to have them used—as faithful stewards.—Z, '14, 138.

We cannot fight evil with evil, wrong with wrong, boasting with boasting and slander with slander, hatred with hatred, etc. If we undertake so to do we shall surely lose in the battle. Our course, like that of David, must be full reliance upon the Lord and the use of the sling and pebble of Truth. If we cannot conquer along these lines we cannot conquer at all.—Z. '08, 233.

THE THREE FAULT FINDERS.

The poem tells that the three faultfinders were provided each with a crystal, to do with as he pleased; and this was the result:

"The *fool* contrived of *his* a *lens*
Wherein, to gloating eyes,
The smallest blot that could be found
Was magnified in size.

"The *just man* made of *his* a *pane,*
All clear without a flaw;
Nor summer sun nor winter rain
Affected what he saw.

"The *wise man* pondered long and well
How best to search, to aid,
Then, taking up the crystal given,
Of *his* a *mirror* made."—Z. '12, 282.

INTERESTING LETTERS

Dear Brother:

Greetings in the name of the Lord:

Seeing the partial list of the number of Stand Fast Bible Students that have partaken of the Memorial, brings to my mind that I did not send in a report. My wife and I want to be numbered with the "Standfasts" in partaking of the Memorial on April 13. We were all alone, but felt the Lord was with us in symbolizing our Master's life blood poured out for us.

We long to be with some of the Stand Fast Brothers and Sisters, but if there are any in Montana, we don't know it. We love the others, with whom we meet occasionally (not in class), but there is a difference in the love. The Lord specially loved John because John was specially lovable. "The Lord does not wish us to give the same treatment to those who walk disorderly or after the flesh as to those who walk after the spirit." Jude 22—comments.

We are trying to sell our ranch, and if it be the Lord's will that we sell, we expect to visit some of the dear saints on the coast this summer, and use as much of our means as we can spare in the Lord's work. Our time before the change is short, evidently must be from the signs of the times. It seems possible that ere the summer is past the Clergy will receive the Apostolic ordination from the Church of England, then it will be a crime worthy of crucifixion even to uphold the Truth. The Lord's will be done. "Thy Kingdom come." So let us each see that our lamps are trimmed, and that our oil is sufficient to furnish us light to bring us to the marriage of the Lamb.

Sister Long joins me in sending love to the Church at Portland.

May God's guidance be yours in the future as it has been in the past, is my prayer.

Yours by His grace,
S. M. LONG, Doughty, Mont.

Dear Brethren:

Greetings to you in the faith of our Lord and Head.

We wish to ask for the addition of one more copy of "Gems" in our supply. We do enjoy them with much interest and feel so grateful to our blessed Lord for thus showing His love to us through you, our beloved Brethren and servants.

We are getting on nicely in our class here. Were over to visit those of like faith in the city yesterday. Had a blessed season of sweet fellowship and were much rejoiced to hear the same points and conclusions brought out that we had arrived at, in our endeavors to settle such in our own minds, which shows the oneness of the spirit's leadings to those of like efforts to know and do His good will. We thank the dear Lord and ever remember you and what you are doing for God's little ones now in their bewildered condition. How gracious our Father is to us with His wisdom to direct.

We are hoping for a call from some of the Comforters in the city soon. We can all go there for the comfort of all.

With loving greetings to all of like faith,
W. G. C.—Calif.

Dear Brother:

May the abounding love of the Father be with you and keep you in the Narrow Way in this time of testing. Truly we are living in the winter after the Harvest. We can see the fiery trials which are trying every man's work at this time and we rejoice to know that we are worthy to be tried. (1 Cor. 3:13.) It proves we are the sons of God. If we have built our house with gold, silver and precious stones, we have nothing to fear as we can see Satan in his true light. (2 Cor. 11:14, 15.)

Well, dear ones, I have taken this opportunity to thank you, as I have already thanked the dear Lord, for the Old Corn Gems. I and two or three of the brothers here are very much cheered and comforted by the thoughts brought forth from the old supply. I have received the seventh one and am looking for the eighth.

I am sure the Lord is giving you all a rich blessing and sometimes I wish I could be with you. It does not matter to a Christian where the Lord places him; he can rejoice just as well in jail as out. I can testify that the Lord has never left me alone very long at a time. (Jno. 18:11.)

I have had splendid time to develop love, patience and meekness and I can see some headway in my own self. It is a hard lesson, to learn to pray for those who persecute us, though we know they are permitted by the Lord and that it is for our edification. Truly we can say, as Joseph said unto his brethren after his father died, "Fear not . . . ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto me for good" (Gen. 50:17-20) and more so when we understand the type.

Well, dear Brother, I will close, as we have not very much time to write during the week. I would ask you to give my love and greeting to all those who are standing fast. Pray for me that I may run and not faint.

Your brother in Christ,

Fred H. Robinson, Jr., **Stand Fast,**

Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

Dear Brethren:

Grace and peace be unto you.

First of all, I want to apologize for not writing sooner; but as I have been very busy in other lines, I failed to get to it.

We have a happy little band of Stand Fast Bible Students here. In all my experience in the Truth I never witnessed such fellowship, perfectly devoid of all wrangling and dispute which was so manifest when we were in the I. B. S. A. The reason is obvious, as back there the two classes mingled together. Since the separation there is absolute harmony, the very thing our dear Lord prayed should be.

We had nine at our Memorial and a feast it was. The friends all join in sending love, and may God bless you in your labors.

Your brother by His grace,
G. H. L.—Ill.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER ELEVEN

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Exceeding Great And Precious Promises

Only those who are following in the pathway which the Apostle here marks out; who multiply their grace and peace, through an ever-increasing, intimate knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord—those who are seeing more and more clearly the divine character and plan, and whose hearts are in a susceptible and impressionable attitude, and upon which is being *fixed* more and more distinctly the image of God's dear Son, who is the express image of the Father. (Rom. 8:29.) Before these, shining out as helps by the way, in letters of light, are the "exceeding great and precious promises" of God's Word, which to other hearts are unilluminated, dark and almost meaningless.

Which and what are these promises?

Oh, they are so many and so precious that it is difficult to know which would rank first. Perhaps first of all is the precious promise, "It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be *like him*, for we shall *see him as he is*." Another is, "If I go away, I will come again, and receive you unto myself"; in harmony with which is the prayer, "Father, I will that these may be *with me*, where I am, that they may behold my glory." Another is, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Another is, "They shall be mine . . . in that day when I make up my jewels." Another is, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Another is, that we are "Heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Another is, that we are "*Begotten again* to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Another is, "To him that overcometh I will give power over the nations"—authority, dominion as "kings and priests unto God" to "reign on the earth." Another is, that these kings and priests will reign to bless, as it is written, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Another promise is that Israel according to the flesh shall yet obtain mercy and blessing through the mercy of these kings and priests of the Gospel age.—Romans 11:32.

Finally, all of these exceeding great and precious promises are summed up by the Apostle in his declaration that, through this knowledge of God and through the influence of these precious promises, it is God's will that we who by nature were children of wrath even as others, "might become *partakers of the divine nature*." Oh, what a rich promise is here! How exceedingly great and precious! Who could have thought such a thing? Our highest thought might possibly have been perfection of the human nature, the earthly image of God, or perhaps, as some have sung, we might want to be angels and with the angels stand. But although angelic nature is higher than human nature, our God has not been content with offering to the "elect" Church angelic nature, but in the riches of his grace and wonderful provision he has far outdone the highest flight of human fancy and has promised that the overcoming Church, the "little flock," to whom it is his good pleasure to give the Kingdom, the bride, the Lamb's wife, shall be exalted to share the *divine glory and divine nature of her Lord*, as well as to share his heavenly Kingdom.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for us; we cannot comprehend why our great Creator should exalt to his own nature such poor, helpless creatures of the dust as we by nature are. But this and all the other gracious promises exhibit to us more and more the heights and depths, the lengths and breadths, of the love of our God, which surpasses human knowledge.—Z. '97, 116, 117.

CONVENTION NOTES.

There will be a convention at Chicago June 27-29. Brothers Hadley, Yerex, Palmer and Campbell will serve as speakers. A season of sweet fellowship, comfort and encouragement is assured all the dear saints who may find it convenient to attend. For further information and particulars, address

W. T. SESSOMS,
Apt. 3, 4637 Indiana Ave., Chicago, Ill.

Friends in the vicinity of Minneapolis will be rejoiced to learn of a three-day convention to be held at Minneapolis, Minnesota, on July 4, 5 and 6. For further particulars and information, address

L. O. NOSBY,
3830 Portland Avenue, Minneapolis, Minn.

IS IT NOT TRUE, then, in the fullest and most absolute sense, that all things are working together for good to those who love God, to the called ones according to His purpose.—Z. '13, 154.

Let us maintain our STAND more and more loyally as the Divine Word increasingly clarifies our vision and distinguishes for us between light and darkness, truth and error, righteousness and sin.—Z. '08, 31.

Our Lord's followers have to some extent lost the esteem of their friends and neighbors; they have been counted as the off-scouring of the earth. *They have been tested in every possible manner. These things were necessary for them.*—Z. '11, 58.

It is our work to take care of ourselves, although we are not to acknowledge or co-operate with those who we believe are associating *error* even with good works. We should not in any sense lend our influence to the assistance of evil.—Z. '10, 269.

A CONCLUDING WORD OF EXHORTATION.

Anything injurious to the real interests of another should never be spoken. We cannot be too careful of our words concerning others. There seems to be a tendency with some of the Lord's children to indulge in confidences with others of the brethren and to relate incidents that *reflect* upon another brother or sister, that *show up* certain manifestations of weakness in that one. The disposition that thus exposes the imperfections of the brethren is *surely not* the love that *covers*. (1 Pet. 4:8.) We know some who have been long in the narrow way, who do not seem even yet to have overcome this disposition. Do they forget that they *themselves* have weaknesses perhaps as pronounced as the brother or sister whom they criticize? The very fact that they ignore the Master's injunction along the line of our text, *("Speak evil of no man" Titus 3:2)* proves their *own lack* of development. Yet these would probably resent the implication that they are guilty of evil-speaking.—Z. '14, 266.

Published by the Stand Fast Bible Students' under the supervision of members of a committee of seven. F. McKercher, Chairman, Box 939, Portland, Oregon.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER ELEVEN

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Cannan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL. Z. '18:51.

Falling Away From Steadfastness

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing that ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." 2 Peter 3:17.

This exhortation applies to the Lord's consecrated people living at the present time. The proof of this is found in the context; the Apostle has just been portraying some of the events connected with the day of the Lord in which we are living—the "Day of Vengeance." In verse ten he has pointed out that the present age will end with the dissolution of the symbolic "heavens" and the symbolic "earth," which, as we have elsewhere shown, signifies the utter disruption of the present social and ecclesiastical order. In verse thirteen he points out that we are looking for a new order of things, and not hoping either to patch up the old order ourselves, or that others will succeed in patching what the Lord has declared "shall pass away." And now in our text he refers to "these things." In the eleventh verse he points out that those who have such expectations should be separate and distinct from all other people in the world, saying, "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" And then in our text and in the verse preceding it, he points out that at this particular time the Adversary will get advantage of certain ones, will beguile them, get them to wrest the Scriptures, and thus to deceive themselves to their own destruction—to their loss of present light at least.

Finding thus that the Apostle is particularly addressing ourselves, let us indeed give earnest heed to his counsel; for we well know that we live in what the Apostle Paul calls that "evil day."—Eph. 6:13.

We notice further that the Apostle is not addressing the worldly, nor even the average nominal Christian; but he specifies that *his warning is to the "beloved," who already had attained to "steadfastness."* This implies that they had become rooted and grounded and built up, both in the knowledge and in the love of God; for only such ever become steadfast. Does it surprise us that the Apostle should address such a developed class of Christians and warn them of their own personal danger of falling into the "error of the wicked?" It does strike us as peculiar, and we are inclined to think that there must be some hidden meaning in the expression—"error of the wicked."

It would be past comprehension that such a class as the Apostle has just described should be in great danger of falling into such errors of the wicked as blasphemy, or murder, or arson, or theft. We must look the matter up more carefully, and see whether or not the translators have given us a faithful rendering of the Apostle's words. We find that they have not, and that the word *wicked* is too strong; the Greek word is *athemos;* according to Prof. Young's Analytical Concordance (undisputed authority) it signifies *"unsettled," or "lawless."* Now, the passage seems more reasonable. There is danger, we can readily see, that those once established in the truth might be so led away as to become unsettled, and to wrest the Scriptures, "handle the word of God deceitfully," and thus become lawless in the sense that they would set aside the Word or Law of God, and take instead thereof a twisted interpretation which would the better suit some theory of their own. Such a wrong course the Apostle points out would surely *unsettle* them, and eventfully mean the destruction of their spiritual interests; and that they would go into "outer darkness" in respect to "present truth." "Beware, lest *ye also,* being led away with the error of the *unsettled,* fall from your own steadfastness."

The Apostle's language not only points to the present time, but seems to imply that there would be previous fallings away or siftings, which he calls "the error of the wicked"—literally, "the delusions of the unsettled or lawless." *The implication seems to be, that the not settled ones would first be shaken out, and that subsequently there would come a still more insidious trial which would test even the "STEADFAST."* . . . Have there been such siftings or fallings away by delusions which have affected those not settled? We answer: Yes, there have been several. . . .

But the Apostle comes in our text to a time *AFTER such delusions had "led away"* those not established or settled; and his warning is given to the *STEADFAST*. The implication seems to be that the Adversary has more subtle delusions before us than any of those in the past; and that the fully consecrated of the Lord's people may need to be more than ever on guard against "the wiles of the devil." —"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things . . . (that all the present institutions will pass away, and that God is about to establish his own Kingdom in his own way;—and knowing further, that just at this particular time there will be a special sifting and testing of those who are in the light), *beware lest ye ALSO, being led away* with the error of the wicked (the *unsettled or lawless* who do not bow IMPLICITLY to the Lord's Word, but wrest it to establish theories of their own), fall from your own steadfastness." . . .

The Apostle in our text cautions that we beware against being *"led away."* The word here rendered "led away" occurs in only one other place in the Scriptures (Gal. 2:13), where the Apostle Paul says, "Barnabas also was *carried away* with their dissimulation." The words *"carried away"* give the same thought as "led away," but a little more strongly; they imply that the danger to the steadfast will be along some line which would *Sweep away or carry away* their judgments from the fixed statements of the divine Word, through personal preference, OR SYMPATHY, or through the influence of some one held in respect or esteem. Let us all therefore be on guard, that . . . we may *not be "carried away,"* but that we may be more determined than ever that—

"To our Lord we will be true
Who bought us with his blood.
Only Jesus will we know,
And Jesus crucified."

Let us not forget that there is a way, and one way only, whereby we may *insure* ourselves against falling into any of these traps of the Adversary. This insurance is not secured wholly by knowledge, although knowledge is a very important element in it; it is secured chiefly by *obedience to the principles laid down in the Lord's Word,* and illustrated in the life and character of our Lord and his Apostles.

The same Apostle who addresses us this caution against falling from our own steadfastness tells us in the same epistle (1:5-12), "If ye *do these things,* ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

What things? Does he give us the particulars of this work of grace that will so *insure us* against falling that we shall receive the great prize? Yes. He tells us that it is by continually adding to our stock of the heavenly graces—"Add to your faith fortitude, and to fortitude knowledge, and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control patience, and to patience piety, and to piety brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly-kindness Love; for these things being in you and abounding, they will not permit you to be inactive or unfruitful in the knowledge (personal intimacy, acquaintance) of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . Therefore, brethren, give the more earnest heed that you may make your calling and election sure, for if ye do these things ye shall never fall."—Z. '97, 275, 278.

"'Faithful unto death!' Lord, day by day,
Help me thus to keep the narrow way!
Strengthen me to bear the scorn and shame—
Portion of all those who take Thy name.
'Faithful unto death!' When all is done,
Cross is changed to Crown, the victory won.
Let me hear Thee say, O, blessed Lord,
'Child, come enter into thy reward!
Faithful thou hast been, come share with Me
Glory, Honor, Immortality.'"

—Z. '17, 204.

UNEQUALLY YOKED

"Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial (Deut. 13:13)? *Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the Temple of God with idols? for ye are the Temple of the living God. . . . Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."* 2 Cor. 6:14-18.

This command, not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers, is very generally quoted with reference to the subject of marriage. And it is properly so applied, being a general principle applicable in a variety of cases. But the Apostle is not here referring to the marriage bond, but to the bonds of friendship and communion, which should be sacred among the saints, and which should not exist between believers and unbelievers. Through this and the preceding chapter he has been discoursing about the doctrine of Christ. He has been preaching the gospel of redemption and resurrection, and of the privilege of being new creatures in Christ, and showing that, having by faith received the blessed gospel, we are ambassadors for Christ and co-workers together with him. . . . The idea is not that the saints should be unkind or unneighborly to the unbelieving; on the contrary, they are to be kind to all men, to the thankful and to the unthankful, to the believing and to the unbelieving (Luke 6:35; Gal. 6:10); but it is that they should not be friends in the sense of having communion and fellowship.

To be *"yoked"* together with another signifies more than a mere passing friendliness or neighborly kindness. It signifies an intimacy, a companionship, a fellowship of spirit. If two are bound together with the same yoke, they must of necessity walk together; and if they cannot agree to walk together, they must sever the yoke, whether it be a literal wooden yoke, or a yoke of friendship. Friendship is more than a passing kindness, and never exists without some bonds of fellowship. With a loyal and faithful Christian the bonds of fellowship or friendship can be none other than those of a common faith and hope. . . .

The Apostle's questions are therefore significant: "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?" None whatever; the man who is righteous cannot approve or agree with the unrighteous; they cannot walk together, either under the one yoke or the other, and they naturally drift apart, because there is nothing to hold them together. "And what communion hath light with darkness?" Can the natural light and darkness abide together? No more can the light of truth in one heart and the darkness of error in another draw them together in fellowship and sympathy. They are repellant and not attractive forces. They cannot assimilate. The light may come where darkness reigns and chase it away, and then there can be communion in light; but when the darkness opposes the light, and instead of giving place to it, seeks to overwhelm it, there can be no communion except the light suffer an eclipse and go out in darkness.

And "what concord (what harmony) hath Christ (the body of Christ, the true Church) with Belial (with those who say, "Let us go and serve other gods"—See Deut. 13:13)?" Those who agree with and fellowship such, have not the spirit of Christ, and are none of his, no matter how loudly they profess to be. . . . God will not share his temple with another. *We must be wholly devoted to him, or we are not acceptable to him. Therefore, every other idol must be banished from our hearts, CHRIST ALONE ENTHRONED, AND ONLY HIS TRUE AND LOYAL SUBJECTS FELLOWSHIPPED.*

"Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

How explicit and positive is the command, and how blessed the promise to the obedient. Every word of the command is full of significance:—

The first word—"Wherefore"—calls up the forceful argument preceding; *i. e.,* in view of the fact that it is IMPOSSIBLE to serve two masters or to have the spirit of Christ, and still have fellowship with the opponents of Christ; in view of the fact that we must either be true and loyal to him, or else be none of his—"Wherefore, come out from among them (from among the enemies of Christ, whether the avowed or the *deceitfully cloaked, who, although professing to be light-bringers and truth-seekers, love darkness better than light, because their hearts are not right; whose conduct shows that they do not love the Lord and the truth, and who only seek to entice the faithful away from the NARROW path which God has marked out); and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean."*

To be separate does not mean to be friends and companions, or to be in fellowship on any grounds. It means that we are to make a clean-cut division between ourselves and all the unclean, the impure in heart, as manifested by their disloyalty to the truth, and thereby to God, its great Author; and that this separation is to be so marked that the disfellowshipped one will be sure to know it, and that none can mistake our obedience and loyalty to the Lord and his truth. There is to be no trifling or half-way obedience in this matter; for we are not only to be separate in spirit from the enemies of the Lord, but we are not *TO TOUCH* the unclean. As the Apostle elsewhere says, we are to "avoid them"—to have no part or lot with them.

It is only on these conditions that we have the Lord's promise—"And I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you; and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." We are thus brought face to face with the alternative of making a definite choice between the Lord and his truth on the one hand, and the enemies of the Lord, whether open or covert, on the other. The command is, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." There is no neutral ground; and no half-way compliance can realize the blessed promise—"And I will receive you," etc.

It is the spirit of the world, and not the spirit of Christ, which considers such a separation from the ungodly and the apostate a hard service. The loyal heart cannot admit to its communion and fellowship those who have not the same loyal disposition. What would be the natural conclusion of a husband, if he saw his wife, who professed loyalty and devotion to him, making a special friend or companion of his enemy, either secret or open? Or of the wife whose husband found pleasure in fellowship and communion with one who is an enemy to her, or who in any way treats her with discourtesy or disrespect? And should we not be equally loyal to our Heavenly Bridegroom and our Heavenly Father? and equally sensitive and *quick to discern the opposing spirit which seeks to undermine and destroy the faith and loyalty of God's elect?* Would not true loyalty and devotion count the injury or the blessing done to a friend as done unto us? So the Lord views the matter when he says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it *unto me."* (Matt. 25:40.) And so also the Psalmist teaches, saying, "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred; I *count them mine enemies."* —Psa. 139:21,22.

To thus come out from among the unclean, and to be separate from all the deceitful, as well as from the open, workers of iniquity, may often *leave us quite alone in the world;* but the truly loyal heart will *prefer* to be alone with God, rather than to have the friendship of those who are untrue to him. Even if the Scriptures had nothing to say on the subject, such would be *natural* to a devoted heart.

It is therefore all in vain that some testify of their love to God while they keep company with his opponents. Their actions speak louder than their words. *It is in vain also that they urge the plea of CHARITY* when the Lord says, "Be ye separate, and touch not the unclean."

Many, and very plain and positive, are the warnings of the Word of God against the "evil communications" that "corrupt good manners." (1 Cor. 15:33.) The Apostle Paul's counsel (Acts 20:28-30) to all the elders of the Church was, "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the holy Spirit hath made you overseers to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood; for I know this, that after my departing shall *grievous wolves* enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of *your own selves* shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." And Jude said, "Beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own desires. These be they who separate themselves (from the truth and its spirit), sensual (minding earthly things, and gratifying the ambitions and tastes of the old nature), having not the spirit. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying with a holy spirit (a spirit of loyalty and devotion to God), keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."—Jude 17-21.

Thus we are put on guard against the enemies of the truth, and it is made obligatory upon all the faithful to be on the alert against them, and to be prompt in discerning and in dealing with them, so that the flock of Christ may be spared. The Apostle Paul grows very earnest in urging this matter, saying, "Now *I beseech you,* brethren, *mark them* which cause divisions and offences, *CONTRARY TO THE DOCTRINE WHICH YE HAVE LEARNED; AND AVOID THEM.* For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own desires; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple (of those not on the alert for the encroachment of error)." (Rom. 16:17, 18.) Again, says the same Apostle (2 Tim. 2:16) . . . *"Shun* profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness."

No, says the ungodly policy of this evil day of COMPROMISES and of disloyalty to "the faith once delivered to the saints," we cannot walk by this strict rule; we dare not recognize and admit the real character of a wolf in the sheep-fold, if the wolf be attired in sheep's clothing; we must accept his professions, notwithstanding his words and his actions to the contrary. We cannot believe that *of our own selves*—right in the midst of the company of the consecrated—any will arise to "pervert the truth" and to "draw disciples after them"; and we dare not "mark" any as such, and "avoid them," or "shun their profane and vain babblings," as the Apostle suggests, for it would be uncharitable, unloving.

Of late we hear a great deal in favor of a BROAD-MINDED charity which gives loose rein to the enemies of the doctrines of Christ— . . . that freely fellowships all and bids all God speed, utterly heedless of the Word of the Lord which says, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God," and "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed, is *partaker of his evil deeds.*"—2 John 9:11.

The warning here is not against those who never knew the truth, but *against those who have known it* and have been blessed by it, and who have afterward turned away from it; of whom says John: They that go out from us—who desert the truth and its interests—do so because they were not of us (2 Pet. 2:20-22; 1 John 2:19), because the old fleshly mind and disposition are still there.—Z. '93, 307, 310.

Distil sweet odors all around,
Though low and mean themselves be found?
Dear Lord, abide with us, that we
May draw our perfume fresh from Thee.

—Z. '09, 25.

ALL DECEIVABLENESS OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

"The energy of the Adversary, with all powers and signs and wonders of falsehood, and with every deception of iniquity to those who are perishing, because they admitted not the love of Truth, in order that they might be saved. On this account God will send an energy of delusion to their believing the falsehood." 2 Thess. 2:9-11—(Diaglott).

Do we forget that the Apostle's solemn words apply particularly in this time? . . . We are now in the time above all others when we may expect strong delusions, not only upon nominal Christendom, but upon those who have been specially favored with the light of Truth now shining. . . .

Some of the strong delusions are apparent enough—Spiritism, Theosophy, Christian Science, Church Federation, the Adversary's means of distracting the hearts and heads of some who otherwise would be Bible students. So far as we understand the prophecies of the Bible, these delusions will have wonderful power upon the world of mankind and especially in Christiandom, which will gain power during the next few years. As the Apostle expresses it, these delusions will have their power largely because God's people have not been sufficiently awake to the privileges of Bible study. . . .

Other Scriptures assure us that the great hour of trial coming upon the whole world must begin with the Church—"with the house of God"—with those professing to be saints. St. Peter implies this when he says, "If it begin first at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?" (1 Peter 4:17.) St. Paul gives the same thought, saying of the Church, "Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it; because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (1 Cor. 3:13.) The intimation is that the severity of the testing will COME FIRST to the saints. . . . Those whose faith structure contains little of wood, hay and stubble will suffer least; while those who have more of these combustibles will suffer the more.

Be it noticed that all the creeds handed down to us contain many errors and that the test of our loyalty to the Truth was our willingness to renounce these and to replace them with the gold, silver and precious stones of the Divine Word. For one reason or another this matter of confessing error and relinquishing it is a severe trial to many. It tests loyalty to God and his Word. It tests humility of heart. It tests willingness to confess our errors. It tests love for the brethren. However trifling the mistake it requires an overcoming courage to declare it, to renounce it. This has been the procedure for the past three hundred years, as God's people have emerged more and more from the smoke of the "dark ages." Because of these difficulties and tests the progress out of darkness into the full, clear light has been slow. At every step of the journey Light and Truth have been slandered, opposed, vilified, persecuted, and the advocates of Truth have been pilloried and roasted either figuratively or literally.

Our Adversary, intent upon maintaining his hold upon the minds of God's people, has fought every inch of Truth for the past four centuries. He has made it hot for those whom the Lord has by his grace been leading step by step into the clear light of the knowledge of the glory of God and of his wonderful Plan of Salvation. Shall we wonder if our Adversary still pursues the same course and with still greater vigor than ever—with still more *"energy"* than ever? By no means! We accept his present opposition as the fulfillment of Scripture and we expect no cessation, *but rather a further aggressiveness on his part.*

It is not necessary for us to assume that only the devilish are used by Satan. Satan uses as his agents in opposing the light, in persecuting those who go on in the path of the just, which shines more and more, *the very best people he can get hold of*. The pathway of the Church shows from the first that the Adversary has succeeded in using good as well as bad men in the accomplishment of his purposes—and undoubtedly the better the man the more acceptable would he be as Satan's servant and the more influential. Note the case of Saul of Tarsus, instigator and assistant in the murder of St. Stephen; note the fact that St. Paul tells us that he acted in all good conscience, and verily thought he did service to God and not to Satan, who blinded his eyes. Note the case of John Calvin, who, with many noble traits of Christian character, was so led astray by the Adversary, so blinded, that he used his high office in Geneva to burn a fellow-Christian at the stake. Doubtless he also thought that he did God service. Note also that scribes, priests and Pharisees were responsible for the death of our Lord and thought that they did God service. Of them St. Peter says that they did it ignorantly, for had they known they would not have crucified the Prince of Life. And so, doubtless, it is today, and will be until near the close; *some loyal of heart, may be amongst our enemies*—slanderers, murderers. Like St. Stephen, let us pray for them.

But we cannot hope thus of all—especially now when the light of Truth is shining so much more brightly and when the Lord is especially testing the loyalty or disloyalty of those professing his name, *with a view to their separation and to the determining of their eternal destinies.* No doubt some who will be of the "Great Company" will be more or less deceived of the Adversary by the strong delusions of this hour. Such in their blindness and deception may set forth darkness for light and light for darkness. They may do it with great positiveness, but scarcely, we think, with bitterness—anger, malice, envy, hatred, strife—works of the flesh and of the devil.

Is it inquired, why? since this Saul of Tarsus was so bitter? We reply that that great persecutor of the Church had not yet received the begetting of the holy spirit. He could not, therefore, sin against it and "grieve the holy Spirit of promise." On the contrary, those who will constitute the "Great Company" will all be of the consecrated and spirit-begotten class. All so begotten of the holy Spirit must have the Spirit of Christ. If it be lost the result would not only mean loss of the illumination and going into outer darkness, but also a total loss—the extinguishing of the Spirit of begetting—the Second Death. Let us not forget that the Spirit of God is the Spirit of love—meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love. . . .

Your great Adversary's endeavor, therefore, is to poison our minds, to introduce thereinto impurity, anger, malice, envy, hatred and other works of the flesh and of the Adversary. To the extent that he succeeds in poisoning our hearts he alienates us from the Lord and from all those who are in accord with him; and this is his object. He succeeds best through human instrumentalities. We all know that if one dog becomes affected by hydrophobia every other animal is more or less in danger of becoming mad through even slight association—and infection. Thus Satan's "strong delusion" spreads from one to another until many be defiled by the root of bitterness. And to the mind, the heart, once embittered and out of alignment with the Divine view of things, everything takes on different colors and the end of the matter is far-reaching; as the Apostle intimates, "Lest thereby many be defiled."

The embittered or impure heart sees things from its own standpoint. The evil tongue once started may "set on fire the course of nature," as St. James declares; and that evil tongue is itself ignited from Gehenna—the Second Death. (James 3:6.) That is to say, the evil, malicious, baneful, slanderous, back-biter is already himself bitten by the Adversary, and, unless cured, his would surely be a case of Second Death. And the same rule would apply to all bitten by him. The Scriptures, therefore, continually urge God's people to observe the Golden Rule—to do, to say, to think of others as they would be thought of, spoken of and dealt with. They continually urge upon us the putting away of bitterness, evil-speaking, busy-bodying, that we may the more fully and the more completely put on Christ and be more fully under the control of his holy Spirit of love, meekness, patience, long-suffering and kindness.

"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" (John 13:17), is the Lord's message.

The Lord is not now speaking to those who need to be forced and pounded into proper shape, in accord with the Divine character. He will deal with that class during the Millennium under the New Covenant, when his Mediatorial Kingdom will bring them into subjection forcibly. Now the Lord is speaking to another class of an entirely different disposition: He seeketh such to worship him as worship him in Spirit and in Truth—such as love him and love his righteous requirements of the Golden Rule, and beyond this, the high standard of the New Commandment—to love one another to the sacrificing point, as he loved the Church and gave himself for the Church.

The Lord is now seeking merely the class called—the "little flock" who possess the Lord's Spirit or disposition, and love the brethren to the self-sacrificing point. It is incumbent, therefore, that all who would be recognized of the Father as possessing the character-likeness of the Lord Jesus should resist and put away, mortify, deaden, every unholy, unloving, unjust sentiment, *as they would avoid the virus of hydrophobia or of a contagious disease.* . . .

In fact, we must not even entertain an unkind thought respecting those who oppose us, but, as Michael would not speak evil of Satan, but said, "The Lord rebuke thee!" so must it be with us. And here notice the slanders of Satan. His own mind, full of ambition, accredited the Almighty with the same and told Mother Eve that God had forbidden her eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil because he desired to keep his human children in ignorance and under mental slavery. He even declared that the Almighty had falsified when he declared that the wage or penalty of disobedience in the matter would be death. As Satan could and did speak evil of the highest dignities, so his followers, misguided by his Spirit, speak slanderously of us. But as Michael dare not bring against Satan an accusation of railing, so let us beware that we do not retaliate upon those who speak evil of us and say all manner of evil against us falsely, because of our faithfulness to the Lord and his Word. A little while and the faithful will all be rewarded.—Z. '10, 102, 103.

If the burning of the body or the loss of all our goods comes in such a course through our faithfulness to the principles of righteousness, through our love and loyalty to the Lord, then happy are we indeed.—Z. '05, 124.

THE PURPOSE OF OUR TRIALS

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." James 1:12.

THE WORD *blessed* in this text may be understood to signify the condition of one in the favor of God. The state of such will be a happy one, a desirable one. The word blessed does not, of course, always suggest a happy condition as relates to the feelings, or emotions, but rather as relates to the outcome. It is used here in connection with the results of trial to the Christian. The child of God who wins the crown of life will be very highly favored or blessed of God; then whatever conduces to this end is a very great blessing, even though it cause much pain to the flesh.

Who will gain this crown of life? Of what character will he be? The Scriptures declare that it will be that man or that woman who endures temptation, trial. What is signified by *enduring* temptation? Evidently the thought is not the enduring of one temptation for one time or for many times. Even the world must endure trials. The reference is to the retaining permanently of the attitude of *patient* endurance and faithfulness when tempted, of remaining true to God under temptation and stress. Temptations come from a variety of sources. . . . But if we love the Lord supremely, that love will become the *chief* impulse of our lives. Our one aim will be that we may glorify God in our spirit and in our body. . . .

THE CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

While we shall never reach the point of perfection in the flesh, nevertheless this power to endure temptation should become more marked day by day, as the New Creature remains loyal, still resisting and striving still harder to resist and be true to the Lord in thought and word and deed. Blessed is the man who shall endure—time after time, day after day—thus proving his faithfulness and obedience to God. For when that man is tried, when the trial time is over, when God has seen that he has demonstrated fully his loyalty, then, when God's "due time" has come, that tried and proven one shall receive the crown of life.

The expression, "the crown of life," is another way of saying the *reward* of life; and this life is on the highest plane. The Apostle Paul speaks of this same crown as the "crown of righteousness." The Apostle Peter calls it the "crown of glory." It is the crown of *righteousness,* because it is the reward that comes as the result of righteousness, of obedience to God and the principles of His government, of faithfulness to our covenant. It is the crown of *glory* because it is the reward which brings glory, honor, immortality. . . .

The Lord is to give us life in fullest measure. The penalty that came upon our race because of sin was death; but now there is an opportunity to regain life—life in perfection, untainted, unending. This life is in the Son of God. At the present time life can be gained only by being begotten to the spirit nature. The crown of life, to be given to the "more than conquerors," is a very special kind of life—immortality, the highest form of life possible, the crown, or pinnacle, OF ALL LIFE. This is to be the reward of the class called in Scripture the Bride of Christ, when they shall have demonstrated their faithfulness, then they shall have been proven worthy to be members of that exalted class. . . .

THE PROPER VIEW OF OUR TRIALS.

There is a special love required by God of the Gospel Church—this peculiar class now called of Him. They are to have a love that is so unselfish that it will be willing, yea, glad, to lay down the earthly life in the service of God, that they may bring blessings to others. To these God has promised the *special* crown of life—immortality, His own nature. These are to be the blessers of their brethren, those of the nature formerly their own. As Isaac was the blesser of Ishmael and of the sons of Keturah, and as the firstborn of Israel were the blessers of their brethren, so these will bless all the peoples of the earth, from among whom they were chosen. *How thankful we should be for an honor so great!*

If these favored children of the Heavenly King could always keep in mind the fact that every trial and testing, every persecution and difficulty, permitted to come upon those who have made the Covenant of Sacrifice with the Lord, is designed to develop them, to prove and test their love, *to demonstrate whether or not their characters are fixed, rooted and grounded in righteousness,* it would set all their painful experiences and temptations in a new light, and would be a great assistance to them in fighting the good fight of faith successfully. For if by these trials and tribulations the Lord is proving our love and devotion to Him, then whatever they may be, whether great or small, we should diligently use them as opportunities to demonstrate to our God the fullness of our love for Him and His cause, and as means by which we may rise day by day to greater heights of spiritual attainment, being changed into the likeness of our Master.

Thus viewed and thus met, every trial and affliction would prove a blessing, a Heavenly messenger, bearing us on wings of faith "Nearer, our God, to Thee, nearer to Thee." Then, beloved, "count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations (trials, testings), knowing this, that the trial of your faith worketh patience (patient endurance). But let patience perfect her work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." Herein we "greatly rejoice—though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations (testings, provings), that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold, which perisheth, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls!"—James 1:2-4; I Peter 1:6-8.

Truly, "these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things that are seen (the things of the present order) are temporal, but the things which are not seen (the glories to come) are eternal."—2 Corinthians 4:17, 18.

"WILL YE ALSO GO AWAY?"

Thus we are assured in the infallible Word of God that those who love the Lord, and who are to receive the Kingdom, will have their love tested by trials and temptations on the way to that Kingdom. Those who do not love the Lord with *ALL* their hearts, in whom self or some other idol has first place, will be seduced by the world, the flesh, or the Devil into some form of rebellion against the Divine Word or the Divine providences. They will have schemes and theories which they will prefer to the Lord's Plan and the Lord's way; and their schemes when analyzed will usually be found to be based either upon selfishness or ambition or upon an evil spirit of envy, hatred, jealousy, etc.

The Lord's leading and the Lord's words lose their attraction to such, and they lose their interest correspondingly; and like those who turned away from the Master at His First Advent, and said, "This is a hard saying," so these also go away and "walk no more with Him." But some will continue to walk with the Lord; some will not be driven away nor decoyed from Him by the arts and wiles of the Evil One and his hosts. These are such as are at heart FULLY the Lord's, not their own; they will follow the Lamb of God, whithersoever He may lead, because they have no will except His will. They will follow Him through all the Narrow Way of discipline and trial in this life; and by and by, as He has assured them, "They shall walk with Me in white; for they are worthy."—Revelations 3:4.

OUR UNFAILING SHELTER.

Nor will this choice company lack in number by reason of the falling away of some. It will be of the predestinated number which God arranged to constitute the Bride, the Lamb's Wife. The Father's foreknowledge made full allowance for all who would turn back, and He knew that the requisite number would follow on, to make their calling and election sure. These have learned that the call of the world, the promptings of the flesh, and the arts of the Adversary, are all snares and traps and pitfalls to drag them down to death. They have learned the sound of the true Shepherd's voice, and cannot be enticed by the voice of strangers.

Precious children of the Lord, blessed are ye! Sheltered in the "secret place of the Most High" no evil shall befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. "He shall give His angels charge concerning thee! They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." How safe and secure are these! Though a thousand fall at their side, and ten thousand at their right hand, yet the plague shall not come nigh them. They have "made the Most High their Habitation," and He will keep them from all harm.

"Under His Wings I am safely abiding,
Though the night deepens and tempests are wild;
Still I can trust Him, I know He will keep me;
He has redeemed me, and I am His child.

"Under His Wings! What a refuge in sorrow!
How the heart yearningly turns to His rest!
Often when earth has no balm for my healing,
Here I find comfort, and here I am blest.

"Under His Wings! Oh, what precious enfolding!
Here will I hide till life's trials are o'er;
Sheltered, protected, no evil can harm me,
Resting in Jesus, I'm safe evermore!"

As the faithful disciples of the Master in the first Harvest realized a meaning in His teachings which others of the professed children of God could not appreciate, so now, at the Second Advent of the Lord, His words have a precious significance to those who are in heart-harmony with Him which none others can realize. And we see now, as at the First Advent, that some are stumbling and going back, while others are being drawn more closely to the Lord than ever, by means of the knowledge of His Plan which He is supplying.

FEASTING IN THE BANQUET HALL.

As we draw nearer the end, we shall not be surprised if the way become still NARROWER, still more difficult, and if the temptations to stumble and to fall become still more frequent. Let us then, dear brethren, be more and more on our guard against the wiles of the great Enemy of our souls, and against the deceptions of our own fallen nature. Let the perfect love of God rule in your hearts, driving out self-love and world-love, with their pride, ambition and folly.

Let entire devotion to God bring into your hearts the promised fullness of joy and rest and peace. Be fruitful branches in the Vine, abiding ever in Him, responding to all the prunings of the great Husbandman with more abundant fruitage.

If beguilements come to us, let us say with the Apostles of old: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." There is life nowhere else, and we wish to go nowhere else. We are feasting in the banquet hall of our Father's House, "and His banner over us is love!" We have an abundant supply; our table is richly laden. So we eat and go on our way rejoicing. We are nearing Home. We shall soon reach the last mile-stone in our journey! Then, with a song on our lips, let us press on!

"Tempted and tried, whatever betide,
In His secret pavilion His children shall hide.
'Neath the shadowing wing of eternity's King,
His children may trust, yea, His children may sing.

"Tempted and tried, yet the Lord will abide
Thy faithful Redeemer and Keeper and Guide,
Thy shield and thy sword, thine exceeding reward;
Then enough for the servant to be as his Lord.

"Tempted and tried, the Savior who died
Hath called thee to suffer—then reign by His side.
If His cross thou wilt bear, His crown thou shalt wear,
And forever and ever His glory shalt share."

—Z. '14, 214, 215.

THE CHRISTIAN'S TOWER OF STRENGTH

"The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." Hebrews 13:6.

The Christian's position in the world is a peculiar one. None others can afford to be so courageous and independent as he. Yet the true child of God is not self-sufficient nor independent of any outside help. He is exhorted in the Word of the Lord to be not boastful, but humble-minded, realizing his powerlessness of himself and his need of God. Indeed, unless he is humble-minded he cannot be pleasing to the Lord. But at the same time he is to be full of courage and confidence. No power in the Universe is able to cope with our God; and He has declared that He is the Support and Shield of His children. He is the Strong Tower of those who put their trust in Him.

If we abide in Christ and His word abides in us, He will be our Deliverer in six troubles, and in the seventh He will not forsake us—because we have been called of God, because we have responded to that call, because we are seeking to glorify Him in our bodies. Hence we need not fear what any man can do unto us. The Apostle Paul, who exhorts us to courage and confident trust in God, was a noble example of courageous faith. He tells us why we have such abundant reason for assurance of faith and absence of fear of man. He says, "Let your conversation (conduct, manner of life) be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

TRUE FAITH NOT PRESUMPTION.

We should not say, The Lord is my Helper, and therefore He will not suffer my house to burn, nor burglars to break in and steal my belongings. I will not lock my doors at night; for the Lord is watching over me and mine. This would not be the spirit of a sound mind. It would not be true faith, but presumption. We should take all reasonable precautions to prevent losses of such kinds. The Lord expects us to do all in our power for our own protection, and not expect Him to work unnecessary miracles to protect us from our own carelessness and inefficiency. Under such circumstances He might allow us to become involved in difficulty and loss, and thus to learn a needed lesson. We are stewards of whatever the Lord has entrusted to us, and He expects us to exercise care in regard to whatever is properly under our care but belonging to Him. We should have buckets and water at hand so as to be ready in case of fire. We should have proper fastenings upon our doors and our windows. When our own duty is done, we are to leave ourselves fully in the Lord's hands, knowing that all will be well with us.

If the Lord permits seeming calamity to come, we may rest assured that it will work out our good, if we are properly exercised by the experience. After having done our part, we should trust all consequences to Him, not doubting that He will care for us in His own best way. The Lord will give us whatever help along temporal lines He sees is for the highest interests of the New Creature, if we do not remove ourselves from His keeping and seek to manage our own interests. . . .

"THAT WICKED ONE TOUCHETH HIM NOT."

Our highest interests, our real interests, are matters of our Father's constant care. If we keep very near to the Lord, we are protected from the power of the fallen angels, who would, if permitted, bring about our ensnarement and overthrow. They cannot really harm us if we are watching and keeping our garments white. Only a lack of faithfulness would subject us to their power to any extent so far as our New Creature interests are concerned. They can neither harm our bodies in any way nor cause any violence to us, unless the Lord permits it for our highest good—perhaps for our deliverance and exaltation, as in the case of our Master.

Let us, then, keep ourselves, that "that Wicked One touch us not." We are subject to various attacks by the deluded servants of the powers of darkness. There may be attacks upon our good name, our reputation, our bodies, or what not, with more or less legality. We are to a considerable extent subject to man, through "the powers that be." Yet our bitterest enemies are powerless to touch us, unless permitted by the Lord. And we cannot be touched by the great Adversary, if we remain true to our covenant—true to the Vows we have taken to the Lord. The Adversary can never touch our real selves as New Creatures save by out own unfaithfulness.

WE WILL WORSHIP OUR GOD ALONE.

It may be the will of God to permit us to suffer, just as He permitted John the Baptist to be imprisoned and finally beheaded, just as He permitted Jesus to be arrested and crucified, and He has permitted many of His saints in the past to be maltreated or killed. But we need not fear what men may do unto us, knowing that our God, whose we are and whom we serve, will be with us constantly, and will cause all things to work out His own glorious purposes *for* us and *in* us.

We would, of course, be glad to please men, if this were possible. But wherever it is a question of pleasing *God* or pleasing *men*, we will say, as did the three young Hebrews to the king of Babylon: "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us . . . But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." We will not do anything contrary to the Divine will, to the command of Jehovah. We will worship our God alone!

When the Jewish Council (Acts 4:13-20) commanded the Apostles Peter and John to speak no more in the name of Jesus, their reply was: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye; for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." When Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, said to our Lord on the night of His arrest and trial, "Knowest Thou that I have power to crucify Thee, and have power to release Thee?" Jesus answered: "Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it were given three from above." So it is with all the footstep followers of the Master. God's grace will be sufficient. Man is powerless to harm a hair of our heads, unless it is permitted of our Father in Heaven for His glory and our own highest welfare.

COURAGE BORN OF FAITH.

The world has often wondered at the calmness of the Lord's humble little ones under circumstances which would cause the stoutest heart to quail. But to follow the course in life which will glorify our God and magnify His grace, to be able to meet wisely and courageously the trials and difficulties as they come to us as Christians, representatives of the King of Heaven, and to meet them in the spirit of rejoicing, counting our tribulations all joy, it is necessary that our hearts be in attune with the Lord, that we have no will but His, and that the fear of man, which bringeth a snare, shall be overcome. We cannot accomplish this in our own strength, but in the strength of God alone. We are instructed to fear Jehovah, and not to fear a weak mortal. The righteous are as bold as a lion, as gentle as a dove, as meek as a lamb. This peculiar combination of boldness, gentleness and meekness should characterize every Christian.—Z. '14, 282, 283.

In Zion's Rock abiding,
My soul her triumph sings;
In His pavilion hiding,
I praise the King of Kings.

Chorus:

My Strong Tower is He!
To Him will I flee;
In Him confide, in Him abide;
My Strong Tower is He!

Wild waves are round me swelling.
Dark clouds above I see;
Yet, in my Fortress dwelling,
More safe I cannot be.

My Tower of Strength can never
In time of trouble fail;
No power of Satan ever
Against it shall prevail.
—Hymn 126.

. . . Had it been foretold precisely what form these deceptions would take, this would have somewhat hindered their deceptive power. God permits these deceptions for the very purpose of *separating* the "overcomers" from all others, and merely guarantees us that the "elect" will be kept from falling. And yet it is quite possible that some of these trials, siftings and delusions, may come *closest* upon those possessing the largest degree of the light of present truth. How all-important it is that we "keep ourselves in the love of God"; that we have not only a knowledge of the truth which *alone* might merely puff up, but that additionally we have the Spirit of Christ, which it should produce. . . .—D. 581, 582.

How *narrow* this way! say some contemptuously of those who, like Paul, devote their energies to the *one thing*—the service of the truth. Yes, that will be the verdict againts you, of all except the few who, like yourself, have carefully sought out this "NARROW WAY," and who are determined to walk in it regardless of the reproach it brings.—Z, '92, 231.

DAY BY DAY, HOUR BY HOUR.

"God broke our years to hours and days
That, hour by hour and day by day,
Just going on a little way,
We might be able all along
To keep quite strong.
Should all the weight of life
Be laid across our shoulders, and the future, rife
With woe and struggle, meet us face to face
At just one place,
We could not go.
Our feet would stop; and so
God lays a little on us every day.
And never, I believe, on all the way
Will burdens bear so deep,
Or pathway lie so threatening and so steep,
But we can go, if by God's power
We only bear the burden of the hour."
—Z. '14, 281.

CAST NOT AWAY YOUR CONFIDENCE

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." Hebrews 10:35.

With very many of God's people, as well as with the world's people, the ideal Christian life is one of constant peace and tranquillity. They have never learned that "the peace of God which passeth all (worldly) understanding," promised to the Christian, is to rule in and keep his *heart* (Phil. 4:7; Col. 3:15), but does not apply to his outward life. They forget, or perhaps never learned, that our Master's words were, "In the world *ye shall have tribulations,* but in Me ye shall have *peace*" (in your hearts). "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you." "If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of His household?" "Yea, and *all* that will live godly in Christ Jesus (in this present world, or dispensation), *shall* suffer persecution." It is of a wicked class, and not of the saints, that the Prophet declared, *"They are not in trouble as other men."*—John 16:33; 15:18; Matt. 10:25; 2 Tim. 3:12; Psa. 73:5.

Only to those who have some knowledge of God's great Plan is His dealing with His People understandable and readable. The world marvels that those whom God receives into His family, as sons by redemption and adoption, should be required or even permitted to suffer afflictions. But to the well-instructed saint the Apostle says, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you." (1 Pet. 4:12.) And this saint may now clearly discern the object and utility of present trials, afflictions and persecutions. He sees that these are in fullest accord with his high calling, his heavenly calling—to be an heir of God and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ our Lord, *"If so be that we suffer* with Him, that we may be also glorified together." Rom. 8:17.

But why should a share in the coming glory be made dependent upon present sufferings? We answer: For two reasons:

POSITIVE CHARACTER NECESSARY.

(1) Severe trials and testings of our love for God and for His Truth, and of our faith in Him and in His promises, are only a wise provision on God's part, in view of the very high honor and responsibility of the great office to which He has called us. If it was proper that our Lord and Redeemer should be tested in all points as to faith and obedience before His exaltation to the excellent glory and power of the divine nature, much more so it is fitting that *we,* who were once aliens and strangers, far from God, and children of wrath even as others, should be thoroughly tested.

We are not tested as to the perfection of our earthen vessels, for God and we well know that in our fallen flesh dwelleth no perfection; but tested as to our new minds, our *consecrated wills,* whether or not these are fully consecrated to the Lord, firmly established in the love of truth, purity and righteousness in general. We are also tested to see whether we will *compromise* any of the principles of righteousness for worldly favor, selfish ambition, or for any of "the pleasures of sin for a season." Those who *love* righteousness and *hate* iniquity, who develop *POSITIVE CHARACTERS,* these are the "OVERCOMERS" who shall, as members of Christ, inherit all things. The undecided, the lukewarm—neither cold nor hot—are far from having the spirit of the Kingdom class, and will surely be rejected —"spewed out."—Rev. 3:16.

LOVE, NOT SELFISHNESS, THE RULING PRINCIPLE.

(2) A share in the coming glory is dependent upon present sufferings, for the reason that the coming glories are to be bestowed only upon those who have the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of holiness. And whoever has received this Holy Spirit, or disposition, and has been transformed by the renewing of his mind, or will, so that no longer *selfishness* but *love* shall rule over his thoughts and words and deeds, that person, if in the world at all, could not avoid present suffering. His love for God, his zeal for God's service and people, his faith in God's Word and his uncompromising attitude respecting everything relating to these, would be so greatly in contrast with the prevalent spirit of doubt, selfishness and compromise that he would be thought peculiar, called an extremist and a fanatic, if not a hypocrite.

Evil surmisings, out of hearts not fully consecrated, will attribute every good deed to some selfish or evil motive, and, therefore, "Ye shall be hated of all men for My (Christ's) name's sake"; for "the world knoweth (understandeth) us not, because it knew Him not." (Luke 21:17; 1 John 3:1.) The reason for all this is evident: It is because "the god of this world hath blinded the eyes" of the vast majority of men; because the faithful, who appreciate the Truth, who have new hearts (wills) and the right spirit on these subjects, are but a "little flock."

PRESENT CONDITIONS MOST FAVORABLE FOR OVERCOMING.

These conditions will not be changed until the testing of the "little flock" is finished. God will permit evil to be in the ascendancy until that testing, SIFTING, refining and polishing of the Bride of Christ is fully accomplished. Then Satan shall be bound for a thousand years, and not be permitted to blind and deceive the nations during the Millennial Age of blessing; but, on the contrary, the "little flock" of overcomers, with Christ, their Lord and Head, will bless all the families of the earth with a full knowledge of the Truth.

Therefore, dear brethren and sisters, let us give heed to the Apostle's words, and not cast away our confidence—confidence in God, in the outworking of His great Plan, and in all who trust in the precious blood and are bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit in their daily lives—meekness, patience, brotherly kindness, love. . . .

The very ones whom God will approve are those who walk by faith. The rewards are for those who hold the faith even unto death. We must beware of everything that tends to weaken or destroy our faith. The Lord deals graciously and generously with us. He will do for us whatever is right. Knowing this we can have confidence in God, even though the decision of Divine Justice should bar us out of Divine favor. Those whose hearts are right are submissive to the Divine will. The Lord wants us to have a faith that will continue in sorrow and in sunshine; that will trust where it cannot see, that will continue under all the leadings of Divine providence. . . .

The great Adversary is not interested in disturbing those who are *"asleep* in Zion"; but he is ever on the alert to mislead and entangle those who are *awake.* And the more active we become in the service of the Lord . . . and, consequently, the more actively opposed to Satan and error, the more he will fight against us. And the more faithfully and vigorously we fight the good fight, as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, the more we shall have of the Master's approval now, and the greater will be our reward in the Kingdom.

INCREASING SEVERITY OF TRIALS.

No doubt there are many and more severe trials just before us. From God's standpoint, having been blest with greater light, we should be able to endure greater trials and afflictions. From Satan's standpoint we, as a Gideon's band, armed with the Truth, are more injurious to his cause than all others combined. The only wonder to us is that he has not assailed us still more fiercely in the *past*. Perhaps he was hindered; perhaps he will be granted yet more liberty to buffet us. . . . Such is our expectation, based upon the direct statements and the types of Scripture.

But such reflections should bring us no sadness, no fear; for He that is on our part is more than all that be against us. (1 John 4:4; Rom. 8:31.) His promises, as well as His providences, are walls of salvation and protection on every hand. What shall separate us from the love of God in Christ? Shall tribulation? No! it shall but cause us to draw closer to Him; and under His protecting care we shall rest. His grace is sufficient for us. His strength is made manifest in our weakness. When we feel weak in ourselves, then we are strong in Him. He will never leave us nor forsake us. . . . —Z. '12, 275, 276.

TWO PRAYERS AND THEIR ANSWERS

—2 Kings 19:20-22, 28-37.—

"God is our refuge and strength; a very present help in trouble." Psa. 46:1.

Hezekiah, king of Judah, is one of the most notable characters of Old Testament history, and our present lesson relates to him. . . . The lesson shows him under severe trials, and how they developed and manifested his faith in the Lord, and the Lord's responses to his trust and prayers.

The Assyrian king, Sennacherib, had invaded the northern or ten-tribe kingdom, and carried its people captive, and had placed peoples of other nationalities in the land in their stead; and eight years after that conquest he determined upon an invasion of the kingdom of Judah. Already, one after the other, the Assyrians had conquered various nations, and were now evidently bent upon conquering Egypt, but first were disposing of the intermediate kingdoms, and Judah was the last of these which lay on the route between Assyria and Egypt. Bent upon conquest and mastery, rather than upon destruction, Sennacherib, while laying siege to some of the intermediate countries, first sent letters and subsequently his representative and general, Rabshakeh, with an armed host to Jerusalem, demanding the full surrender of the kingdom, that the people might be deported to other lands, as the people of the ten tribes had been.

These letters and the message were full of boastings of the power of Assyria, and the conquests already made, and promised the people of Judah homes and circumstances similar to those then enjoyed, the object, apparently, being to establish the Assyrian empire on a firm basis by obliterating as far as possible the feelings of patriotism in the various peoples conquered. Not only did these messages boast of the power of Sennacherib, as exemplified in other wars, but taking cognizance of the fact that Israel trusted in Jehovah, they first declared that the Assyrians were sent there by Jehovah for the very purpose of overthrowing the kingdom, and taking people captive, and secondly declared that their trust in Jehovah was vain, because the various nations which had been conquered trusted severally to their own gods, and yet all alike failed; and that Israel's God, Jehovah, could do nothing more for them than could the other gods for the other peoples, against the mighty power of Assyria, which was rapidly becoming a world-empire.

Hezekiah's first move was to placate his adversary, by becoming his vassal, and paying annual tribute, and as a preliminary step in this direction he sent Sennacherib a present of great value, gold and silver, ivory couches, etc.—even stripping the gold and silver ornaments from the Temple for this purpose. Herein we believe he greatly erred, and it would appear to have been as a consequence of this failure to at once recognize Jehovah as the almighty ruler and preserver of his people and typical kingdom, that the Assyrians were permitted to assail them, and to destroy many of the outlying smaller cities, and to besiege Jerusalem, the capital city, with fortresses, etc. Nevertheless, when it came to the extremity, Hezekiah's faith in the Lord increased in proportion as the power of the Assyrians was manifested, and the condition of his own city and people became the more critical. Then it was that he did what he should have done at the very beginning—he, with Isaiah, the prophet (his faithful friend and adviser and supposed tutor in earlier years), joined together in prayer to the Lord (2 Kings 19:1, 2, 14-19), in the Temple, laying before the Lord the letters received from the haughty Sennacherib, and recounting his boastful words, beseeching the Lord to have mercy upon his covenanted people, who now, more than for centuries, were seeking to please and serve him, and to grant them deliverance from their enemies, when there seemed no hope from any other quarter.

It was in answer to this prayer that Isaiah sent to Hezekiah the message of our lesson: "Thus saith the Lord God of Isarel, that which thou hath prayed to me against Sennacherib, king of Assyria, I have heard," etc. The remainder of Isaiah's message was evidently intended to be the answer which Hezekiah should send to Sennacherib, through Rabshakeh, that the people of Jehovah laughed to scorn his boastful message and ultimatum. The answer calls attention to Sennacherib's boastful pride and his blasphemy of the only true God, the God of Israel. The threat of the hook in the nose and the bridle in the mouth is figurative, representing the manner in which bullocks and horses are controlled; thus would the Lord control the Assyrian army. "Isaiah said unto him, Thus shall ye say to your master (Hezekiah), Thus saith the Lord, be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria has blasphemed me. Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumor, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land." (2 Kings 19:6, 7.) The message calls attention to the success of the Assyrian monarch previously, and points out that it was because the Lord had so permitted, designed and foretold, but points out, also, that Sennacherib is equally under the divine power, and on the present occasion, having blasphemed Jehovah, would be unsuccessful, would be turned back, while his people, Israel, and their king, Hezekiah, would be heard and succored.

Spiritual Israelites may draw valuable lessons from the foregoing. WE SHOULD BEWARE HOW AT ANY TIME WE LOSE SIGHT OF THE LORD'S POWER ON OUR BEHALF, NO MATTER HOW THREATENING OR GREAT OR DARK THE EVIL WHICH ASSAILS US. A PROPER FAITH WILL LOOK UP TO GOD, UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, AND RELYING UPON HIS PROMISES WILL SEEK HIS AID, RATHER THAN SEEK TO PURCHASE DE-

LIVERANCE FROM THE GREAT ADVERSARY, SATAN, BY ANY COMPROMISES. But how many, on the contrary, are disposed to do as Hezekiah did, purchase peace with things consecrated to the Lord—to compromise the truth; for instance, if threatened with the disfavor of friends or neighbors or employers, how many are willing to conciliate such adversaries by a more worldly course, by subtracting from the time, influence, means, etc., consecrated to the Lord, considerable portions to be given to worldly service, or to secure domestic peace or social advancement, or commerical prosperity. So surely as the Lord's consecrated people do this, we may expect that the Lord will permit to come upon them the very difficulties which they dread and seek to avert by unholy compromise.

They need just such a lesson; and as a faithful father will give needed chastisement and corrections to his son, so the Lord deals with those who have been adopted into his family. But with the world in general matters are different; God's special dealings and special corrections are the manifestations of his special care for those whom he is now selecting from amongst mankind for a great future work, for which they need to be prepared, and for which unlimited faith and trust in the Almighty are absolutely essential. As David expressed it, "Before I was afflicted I went astray"; in other words, it was because he went astray, and because he was a consecrated servant of God, therefore, instead of permitting him to go far astray he was corrected in order to bring him back. So with all who have entered into the New covenant, and accepted the call to joint-heirship with Christ; they are not permitted to go astray and make compromises whose tendency would be to lead them further and further astray from faith and trust in the Lord. Therefore they are chastened, and happy it is for all of Spiritual Israel who, like Hezekiah, permit the divine chastisement to develop more and more of faith and obedience.

It required great faith and courage on the part of Hezekiah and his princes, and the people of Judah in general, to resist the great power of Assyria, and to send to Sennacherib such a reply as the Lord had indicated, yet evidently their faith and trust were developed in proportion to the difficulty; and shortly they beheld the fulfillment of the Lord's declaration respecting the Assyrians, Rabshakeh returned to meet Sennacherib, and to give him Hezekiah's answer, and then, apparently, was fulfilled the catastrophe upon Sennacherib's army, referred to in our lesson.

In one place this is called "the blast of the Lord," from which some have supposed that it was a simoon, or sandstorm, not uncommon in the vicinity of the Arabian desert. In the lesson it is spoken of as the smiting of the angel of the Lord, and others have assumed from this that it was a pestilence which broke out in Sennacherib's army and destroyed in one night one hundred and eighty-five thousand of his warriors; because elsewhere pestilence is spoken of as being the work of a destroying angel or messenger. (See 2 Sam. 24:16, 17.) Jewish tradition ascribes the destruction to a pestilence. The word "angel" here, as often elsewhere in the Scriptures, does not necessarily refer to a member of the angelic order of beings, but simply signifies "messenger"; and God is as able to use winds or waves, lightnings or sandstorms, or pestilence, as any other agency in the execution of his will. "Who maketh the winds his angels, and flaming fire his servants."—Psa. 104:4.

Egyptian history contains an account of the remarkable departure of Sennacherib's army, and ascribes its retreat to an invasion of field mice, which gnawed the quivers and bowstrings and the thongs by which their shields were managed. But some have suggested that this is the Egyptian figurative way of speaking of a pestilence, because with them the mouse was a symbol representing pestilence. There are many other notable instances in history in which, apparently, divine providence has similarly intervened and protected those whom it was not the divine will should be further injured. For instance, the notable case of the Spanish Armada, designed to work great havoc upon the people of Great Britain, and apparently well qualified to do the work, was destroyed by a remarkable storm. Similarly, Napoleon's army, which had invaded Russia, and was encamped at Moscow, was, it is said, forced to retreat because of a heavy fall of snow, which is said to have caused the death of 20,000 of Napoleon's horses, and compelled the retreat which involved the almost complete destruction of his army, numbering over a quarter of a million. In the churches of Moscow the narrative of the destruction of Sennacherib's army is read on the anniversary of the retreat of the French from their city, as marking a similar interposition of divine providence.

As the Israelites accepted the overthrow and turning back of Sennacherib's forces as of divine interposition, although the sceptically inclined might view it differently, and ascribe it to natural causes, so Spiritual Israelites often find that God's answers to their prayers, and fulfillments of his promises are of such a kind that the trustful may see in them the hand of God, while those living less near to the Almighty will see in them nothing but the casualties of nature. Thus it is that our own spiritual condition has much to do with our joy in the Lord, and our appreciation of his care over us, and of the fulfillment of his promises. All of the divine leadings are along this line, namely, "According to Thy faith be it unto thee." He who will not exercise faith in God cannot have the joy and peace which come to and are intended for believers only. It is the proper thing that as the Lord's people we should not only trust him for his goodness and providential care, and call to mind his promises, and plead them before him in our supplications, but it is also equally proper that we should seek to see at every step of life's journey how divine providence is directing our way, and causing all of life's affairs to work together for good to those who love God. Such expectations of divine care, and such waiting for it and looking for it, are evidences of true faith, and pleasing to the Lord. Accordingly, he assures us that without faith it is impossible to please him, and again he assures us, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your FAITH."—Z. '98, 325, 326, 327.

. . . While we are laying down this sacrifice, consuming it day by day, the merit of Christ's righteousness covers our flesh, so LONG AS WE ARE LOYAL TO GOD. And we must keep this sacrifice on the altar until it is completely consumed.—Z. '17, 28.

A Persian fable says: One day
A wanderer found a lump of clay;
So redolent of sweet perfume,
Its odors scented all the room.
"What art thou?" was his quick demand.
"Art thou some gem from Samareand,
Or spikenard, in this rude disguise,
Or other costly merchandise?"
"Nay, I am but a lump of clay."
"Then, whence this wondrous perfume—Say!"
"Friend, if the secret I disclose,
I have been dwelling with the rose."
Sweet parable! And will not those
Who love to dwell with Sharon's Rose,

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

It is a very great privilege that we are permitted to have a share in the sufferings of Christ.—Z. '14, 85.

The Master's advice then is good still, "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation."—Z. '11, 75.

He who would continue to be taught of the Lord must continue to listen for his voice, continue to be in the hearing and obeying attitude of heart.—Z. '07, 348.

. . . The Lord wishes us to be continually attempting to copy his perfection and to recognize no inferior standard.—Z. '07, 137.

. . . God's favor and close communion and protection cannot be expected while we permit in our hearts a rival. . . .—Z. '07, 327.

We are commanded to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to reprove them.—Eph. 5:11.

It may sound harsh to some, because of their misconception of the subject, when we say that the Lord's message and leading were as much intended to shake off and repel one class, as to attract and to hold another class.—Z. '98, 39.

Let us not stray from the Fold, to the right hand or to the left, nor be attracted away from the green pastures and pure waters to go browsing on the thistles and poisonous weeds of some by-path.—Z. '14, 200.

. . . Finally NONE will "stand" except the elect, and they "on the sea of glass mingled with fire." (Rev. 15:2.) All others are to fall more or less, though some will subsequently be rescued from the catastrophe—"saved so as by fire."—(1 Cor. 3:15.) Z. '07, 53.

. . . We have laid hold upon one who is mighty to save; yea, more, *he has laid hold upon us,* or, as the Apostle expresses it, "we have been apprehended of Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:12.) Neither will he let us go so long as our hearts are LOYAL TO HIM.—Z. '07, 365.

Whoever walks as Jesus walked is in harmony with the Divine Word and will. We are not to trust to our impressions, our own conceptions of what is right and advantageous, as many others do; but the Word of the Lord is to abide in us, and to govern our lives.—Z. '14, 126.

. . . Wobbling and indecision are responsible for the majority of failures; . . . a POSITIVENESS of will, of intention, is necessary to every good or noble result. As Christians—as disciples of Jesus, as soldiers of the cross, followers of the Lamb—we need to have this great fact well impressed upon our hearts.—Z. '07, 4, 5.

It is those who seek the Lord with sincerity, with honesty, without guile, and without selfishness, who find him, have fellowship with him and become his true disciples, and eventually will have joint-heirship with him in his Kingdom.—Z. '08, 13.

. . To His disciples our Savior said: Are you able to lay down your lives completely, even though this shall mean to you injustice in the taking away of your lives? Are ye able to drink of the Cup that I shall drink of? *There will be disgrace and ignominy connected with it all.* Are ye willing to share with Me in this, My Cup? They answered: "We are able." They were willing.—Z. '14, 85.

Let us apply to our own hearts the lessons that evil is INSIDIOUS, and that every parting of the ways, every leaving of the divine path, signifies a separation from righteousness to a degree we are unable to estimate at the beginning. Let us learn that the only safe course to pursue is to trust in the Lord and to be glad to have whatever his providences may mark out for us, and to refuse to have anything contrary to his will.—Z. '04, 189.

According to the Galilean Prophet it would be useless for anyone to approach God's altar with a sacrificial gift while his heart contained any enmity against another. Hence any of Christ's disciples before offering a gift to the Lord should search their hearts and purge them from enmity, knowing that otherwise their sacrifices and praises would be vain.—Z. '10-57.

. . . Just as soon as the sealing process has been accomplished . . . the storm will sweep down upon us—upon the whole world to some extent, but especially upon the sealed ones, to try them, to prove them, and to test them. Not a pleasant prospect, some may say; but we answer that all of our heavenly Father's provisions for us are agreeable when we are rightly in harmony with him and his precious Word.—Z. '07, 147.

As one thinks upon things that are good, the mind becomes stored with good. Wherever there is a mouth disposed to speak upon things that are evil, there is an evil disposition—a mind in which evil has been stored. Whatever one has stored up in the mind will be *topmost* and sure to be spoken. An evil treasure will show itself, despite all endeavors to hide it; and likewise a good treasure will manifest itself; for the mind can hold only a certain amount.—Luke 6:45. Z. '14, 246.

Can I truly affirm that I am
"All for Jesus, all for Jesus—
All my being's ransomed powers;
All my thoughts, and words, and doings,
All my days, and all my hours?",

If so, then we are just *narrow-minded* enough to say, This one thing I do; and I make everything else bend to this one thing.—Z. '92, 232.

Since the Lord's followers have fallen flesh it is not possible for them to be perfect as God is perfect—except in heart, in intention. But this good heart intention is not sufficient to prove us worthy of a share with Christ as his "elect" to the glories of his Kingdom. Our profession of pure heart and God-likeness must be tested. It must be demonstrated and developed to the point of *fixity* of character. It must stand tests of temptation. It must endure faithfulness under stress. Hence those accepted as disciples of Christ are required to be faithful under *very trying circumstances.*—Z. '10, 57.

. . . Those who . . . trust in the Lord, and they only, are able to properly view and meet the affairs of life, and they alone are able to rejoice in tribulation, in persecution, in suffering for righteousness' sake, because they know, as the Apostle assures us, that all these things are working out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and that present difficulties and trials are not worthy to be compared with the glories that shall be revealed in us by and by—when we with our dear Redeemer shall sit upon the throne of earth for the blessing of all the families of the earth.—Z. '07, 125.

The courage, the fortitude, of our dear Redeemer in walking the *narrow way* fills us with admiration. How strong and brave was His character! He had no thought of looking back; His whole being was intent upon accomplishing the will of His Father in Heaven—upon sacrificing Himself in the interest of the world. What a noble Example was set before the Apostles!—greatness in humility, victory through entire self-surrender!—Z. '14, 85.

The proper course for us as disciples of Christ is that we observe the Golden Rule in our conduct, watching over our thoughts and our lips; and also that we present continually all that we have and are in sacrifice to the Lord. But obedience, justice, *must come first,* for this is demanded by the Law of God. Before we can make much development in the cultivation of sacrificial love, we must learn to have a love of justice, righteousness. There is a trite and true proverb that a man must be just before he is generous. It behooves the children of God, as members of the New Creation, to study with diligence this subject of strict justice toward all, and to put into practice day by day this quality of character which is ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL if we would be acceptable to God; for it lies at the foundation of all Christian character.—Z. '14, 101.

We have taken the name of Christ as our name. We profess to be members of the Body of Christ. And the holy name of the Head belongs to all the members of His Body. The honored name of the Bridegroom belongs to His Espoused. What carefulness the thought of this should give us, and how appropriate it is that we should see to it that we have not taken that blessed name in vain: *that we appreciate the honor, the dignity, the responsibility, of our position as His representatives and ambassadors in the world!* Let us, therefore, walk circumspectly, taking earnest heed that we bring no dishonor to that hallowed name: but on the contrary, that we honor it in our every thought and word and deed.—Z. '14, 56.

It is important, therefore, that we notice the character of our tests. God is not testing us to see whether or not our *flesh* is perfect, for He knew all along that amongst men there is none righteous, no, not one. The Father's tests for those whom He receives as sons are tests of loyalty to Him, loyalty to the principles of righteousness, loyalty to the Truth, loyalty to the Divine methods—a refusal to take our way or to seek our own glory or our own ease at the expense of truth or of the Divine method.—Z. '12, 51.

There is no question that Satan and his legions are as able and as willing as ever to do all the mischief that Divine wisdom may see fit to permit them to do. . . . But let us always remember God's care over his people to preserve them from every calamity which would not under divine supervision work out for them some valuable lesson or experience; and let us remember that he is able and willing to overrule the wrath of men and of devils and to restrain the remainder that would hinder his grand purposes.—Z. '97, 216.

. . . What more could God say to us or do for us than he has already said and done? Lifting us from the horrible pit and miry clay of sin and condemnation, he has placed our feet upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and put a new song in our mouths. Yea, more, he has adopted us into his family and made us heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord "to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."—1 Pet. 1:4, 5. Z. '07, 44.

Our CHIEF concern as followers of Christ is to seek to attain a share in God's Kingdom with our dear Redeemer—a share in the Millennial Kingdom as the Bride of Christ, who shall sit with him in his glorious Throne for the blessing and uplifting of the world of mankind. We have our Master's assurance for it that whoever pursues this course will do wisely and that God will look out for his earthly interests, for his highest welfare. So doing our lives will be crowned with peace and joy and rest in the Lord, which in his Word he has promised those who trust him.—Z. '10, 73.

. . . The tests will probably not come to us along the lines of our expectancy, but, on the contrary, from unexpected quarters. That many such tests are before us in the "evil day" in which we are living, the Apostle assures us. He tells us that we will require the whole armor of God in order to be able to withstand the assaults upon our faith in this time. So subtle will be these assaults that our Redeemer tells us that if it were possible the "very elect" would be deceived. But, thank God, it is not possible for these to be deceived. The Lord has become their refuge and their habitation; he has accepted the supervision of their affairs; he will not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able, but will with the temptation provide a way of escape. (1 Cor. 10:13.) Z. '07, 170.

Christ.—Once in all history we meet a being who never did an injury, and never resented one done to him, never uttered an untruth, never practiced a deception, and never lost an opportunity of doing good; generous in the midst of the selfish, upright in the midst of the sensual, and wise far above the wisest of earth's sages and prophets, loving and gentle, yet immovably resolute; and whose illimitable meekness and patience never once forsook him in a vexatious, ungrateful and cruel world.—Z. '92, 254.

The spiritual life, like the physical life, develops according to fixed laws. As the natural life must be nourished and fed according to the laws of nature in order to sustain and develop it and keep it in health, so the spiritual life must be nourished by the various means of grace and fed continually by the Word of the Lord.—"Thy words were found, and I did eat them."—Z. '97, 133.

. . . Those whose eyes of understanding have been opened to a precious appreciation of the divine plan cannot too highly esteem the favor of God which they enjoy, nor too surely realize that . . . the Lord is keeping them from falling, according to the promise in his Word, "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee."—Z. '07, 196.

We are leaky vessels, and the Truth gradually ebbs away unless we replenish.—Z. '12, 184.

It is indeed no easy matter to tread the pathway of humility, to continually check the human aspirations, and to keep the sacrifice on the altar until it is fully consumed. —Z. '13, 57.

The great hour of temptation foretold in the Psalms and prophecies and by our Lord and the Apostles, "The hour of temptation shall come upon all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth," IS UPON US, and, as the Apostle suggests, the question is not, "Who shall fall," but, "WHO SHALL BE ABLE TO STAND (FAST)?"—Z. '09, 283.

INTERESTING LETTERS

Dear Brother:

Just a line regarding our experience at ———. Brother Hadley said to me after it was over, "Do you know what this reminds me of?" I said, "No; but it must be something wonderful." "Well," he said, "it reminds me of the visit of the two angels to Sodom and pulling Lot out in such haste."

We had met one brother from there while at Oklahoma City and he told us that it would be absolutely useless to try to get a hearing from any others. But our God is great and we concluded to try. I knew some of the friends there and before noon had a couple of them up in the hotel with Brother Hadley, while I went to call on some more. The Lord must have directed our steps, for all with whom we met and talked came to see eye to eye with us. At first they all seemed engaged, with no time to listen, till we began to tell them this sweet message. Then they dropped everything else—home, business, meals, sleep, everything—and Brother Hadley talked from 6 to 12 P. M., and they arranged a morning meeting, where we talked till train time.

There the Lord sent a brother to us just in time to hear two lectures which set him right. He had been released from prison before his sentence had expired. Thus the whole class became Stand Fast and we believe are unmovable.

They hung on to us till we had to run through a heavy rain to catch our train, but the pleasure was all ours.

F. M. CAMPBELL.

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

Just a few lines to unload my heart to you a little. I believe, I appreciate you and your work more than ever. I am slow to express appreciation, but when I do I mean it.

Our hearts were rejoiced almost beyond measure to hear the good reports of the Eugene convention from our own dear Brother McLain. I say "our" brother, for he was one of us. Our class was not complete without him. We lived and loved and prayed as one; we worked and ran and fought together. He entered the race for the crown among us, and when in tears we parted we solemnly pledged to meet at the Throne. We cannot fully express our joy that you have met him and that he is still standing fast.

We are indeed a Stand Fast Bible Class. We have stood fast all the time. We were intently watching for the separation of the Elijah and Elisha classes and in confidence and prayer preparing for the end, especially since Passover, 1918. Dearly beloved, we were hunting for you, and as soon as we heard of you we were delighted.

We thank you for your letter regarding the Brother Wisdom matter. Perhaps it is now nicely adjusted. We hope so. We felt it to be the Lord's will to express our confidence in him as a brother, and still feel that this action on our part has helped rather than hindered adjustment.

We surely rejoiced at the recent visit of dear Comforters Hadley and Campbell. They did us much good. The dear friends, whose sacrifices have made it possible for the Comforters to visit scattered classes throughout the Middle West and East have surely rendered a service much like the anointing of Jesus' feet by Mary.

Assuring you of my fervent love and continued prayers, and greatly appreciating yours, I am,

Your Brother in Him,

EDGAR A. FOWLER—Mo.

Dear Friends:

We were recently informed as to the incidents which led to your present stand. We endorse it because we are not to compromise now. The road is narrow, but grace sufficient is promised to us in every trial. Fear of man seems to have been a snare. Our experience in resisting the five ——— ——— were most wonderful, and the blessings which we have received are most marvelous.

The petition and the associations with the Labor Tribune make it almost impossible to believe that such noble characters as we have associated with for the last eight years could compromise at this late hour. Brother Heard's treatise on The Ship (Acts 27) is most wonderful and accurate.

The realization of the Church's hope is very near. How close to the Lord we should be.

May the Lord bless you, one and all, in your endeavors to serve Him and the remaining saints.

Believe us, your brethren by His grace,

C. AND M. I.—Pa.

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275 Orange Street, Elgin, Ill., May 25, 1919

Bear Brethren:

Greetings in His name.

I want to give a little expression to the unspeakable joy which God has given me within the last two weeks; a joy that must be the glorification this side the veil. I thought before it might possibly have been the privilege of putting out the Seventh Volume, but this joy is unexplainable, and it seems there are others who are realizing this same joy.

For sixteen years I have been in the Truth and participating in the Harvest Work quite a bit. I accepted the Seventh Volume whole-heartedly, but since 1918 I just couldn't understand why the Towers would say we have a great work just before us, etc. In my endeavor to be true to the channel (I. B. S. A.), as I thought it, I did petition work, track work, etc., but oh, how my heart ached! I was so confused and many times walking the streets I would pray, "Oh, Lord, there is such a veil before my eyes. Make it plain." Oh, such glory, the mists have all rolled away.

I was the only one in our class of thirty-five who voted to do the petition work, because I thought, "Why, if the Lord is directing the channel, should we not follow directions?" I have just received the assignment of all Kane County as territory for colporteur work, but I was puzzled, and asked an elder, "If the Elisha class is to do the second smiting; how is it? Are we of the Great Company Class?" His reply was: "Are you just as willing for the Lord to put you in the Great Company Class as anywhere; would you be just as happy?" I said, "No, I wouldn't, at first at least, because there was one hope held out to me and I have the assurance that I am faithful to my consecration, and it would be my own fault if I lost out." He said "that is a very wrong condition of heart."

I called on two friends who were visiting here from Chicago who had been very dear friends of mine, but thinking they had been led into some deception, I didn't know what, I called on them and heard three things—the **truth** separates, the First and Third Volumes show separation and the Channel was the Lord and the Apostles working through the Seven Messengers and Brother Russell the last Channel. I saw how the I. B. S. A. was not the Channel and I went home and studied and before I slept that night I saw the step and obeyed.

Please send me all of the different issues of Corn Gems and whatever else is good, as there are some more here who are looking into these things.

One of our elders said they would rather go to our funeral than to have this happen to us. **Please send us a Comforter when possible.**

With much love,

FLORENCE GUSTAFSON.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER TWELVE

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BEWARE of all who make a great palaver about love! for Satan often uses it as the garment of light to cover bad conduct or bad doctrines—whose real lovelessness he would thus screen from criticism. For instance, true love begins with God, and says, "Let God be true, if it prove every man a liar." False love often is really self-love, which would not hesitate to trail even divine honor and love and justice in the dust, in order to glorify self as the founder of a theory.—Z. '95, 210.

CONSECRATION—AFTER CLOSE OF HIGH CALLING.

Question (1911)—1—Is it your thought that those consecrating after the door to the high calling is closed may have a resurrection to the spirit nature?

Answer—No, there will be no begetting of the Spirit that we know of after the high calling is closed; and if there is no begetting of the Spirit then, there will be no birth of the spirit. The only thought we have in connection with that is what we expressed a moment ago, namely: that some might be accepted as of the Ancient Worthy class *if they laid down their lives in loyalty to the Lord in that time of trouble,* and then when the ancient worthy class may possibly have the spirit nature given to them at the end of the millennium, such being of that class might have the opportunity to obtain the spirit nature.—Question Book, p. 152.

CONSECRATION—REWARD FOR THOSE NOT BEGOTTEN.

Question (1911)—3—If any consecrated now and failed to be begotten of the Holy Spirit,, where would the Lord place them?

Answer—We would presume that if they were faithful, as the prophets of old were faithful, *to the extent of laying down their lives in the service of righteousness and truth,* that God would give them a share some way with the ancient worthies. In other words, that if such should pass into the time of trouble to a considerable degree, and there lose their lives because of faithfulness to the Lord, that he would do just the same for them that he will do for the ancient worthies—they will be counted in with the ancient worthy class.—Question Book, p. 152.

CONSECRATION—RECLOSING OF DOOR.

Question (1910)—2—Is the time open yet for anyone to consecrate for the high calling?

Answer—My answer, dear friends, is, that the calling of God belongs to this age, and it is our understanding, as already published, that the calling time has ceased. Nobody is being called, because a sufficient number have already responded, is the thought that we have. That is, that a sufficient number had responded in 1881. You remember the evidence we set forth in the second and third volumes of Scripture Studies. Our thought is, the Lord represents that as one would go out, or would fail to be accounted worthy of a place as one of the priests, and take his position as one of the Levites, of the Great Company, that someone else would be allowed to take his place —as the Scripture suggests, "Take heed, let no man take thy crown." These consecrated ones who had crowns assigned to them, if they are not faithful, so they will receive the crown, will lose it, and somebody else who had no special calling, somebody who is hungering and thirsting, *consecrated, and waiting,* will be ready to receive it. So, then, our answer to the question in brief would be, If you want to consecrate to the Lord, do not stop to inquire—if you have a right spirit about the matter you will not stop to inquire how much you are going to get; if you have the right spirit in the matter, you will want to give your heart to the Lord and give him all you have, and wish you had ten times as much as you have to give, irrespective of what you are to get. If you are only to get earthly life, you will want to consecrate yourself. Any other spirit would be a wrong spirit. So make your consecration and leave it to the Lord what reward he is going to give you. Like a great man would do on the earth, much more so the great God will do on the spiritual plane. If you were dealing with a king and you did him a small service, you would not expect he would give you a penny; if he would give you anything he would be likely to give you a dollar, if he were a rich king. So with our heavenly Father, whenever he gives any rewards, you may be sure they are exceedingly abundant more than you could ever ask or think, according to the riches of his grace.—Question Book, pp. 148, 149.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

The announcement made in Old Corn Gems, Number Eight, to the effect that Brother Wisdom had withdrawn from the Stand Fast Bible Students was improperly worded and conveyed the thought that he was no longer a Stand Fast Bible Student. We regret very much that this should have occurred, and recognize that thus an unintentional injustice was done the Brother and unnecessary pain caused the dear friends. We desire, therefore, to state that certain circumstances and misunderstandings which led us to the belief that Brother Wisdom did not intend to further co-operate with us have now been clarified and removed, and that now fullest harmony, confidence and sweet fellowship prevail.

(Signed) COMMITTEE.
F. McKercher, Chairman.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Our Comforters, Brothers Hadley, Palmer and Campbell, will be in Chicago June 27-29. From there they will go to St. Joseph, Mo., for Convention July 1-2, making their way westward from there and arriving on the Pacific Coast about the middle of July.

Brothers Heard and Livermore have for some time been serving the friends on the Pacific Coast.

Brother Wisdom is at present in Portland, and we are glad to say he is in fullest harmony with all co-operating in this movement.

It is the privilege of the Lord's people to *ask,* in order that they may have fullness of joy. We have this joy and the "peace of God, which passeth all understanding," and we rejoice greatly in hope of the glorious things which the Father has in store for us and which the Holy Spirit reveals through the Word. The joyful Christian is the thankful Christian. The thankful Christian is the one who is making the best use of his life. By reason of having exercised thankfulness of heart, he will be the better prepared for the Kingdom. Those less thankful may attain the Kingdom for aught we know. But the thankless heart will not get the Kingdom.—Z. '13, 87.

Published by the Stand Fast Bible Students' under the supervision of members of a committee of seven. F. McKercher, Chairman, Box 939, Portland, Oregon.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER TWELVE

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Cannan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH *TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL.* Z. '18:51.

DANGER FROM SPIRITUAL PRIDE

Pride in any form and in anybody is a dangerous thing. In a worldly way the proverb is well attested, "Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall"; and surely very, very few people have anything of which they might justly be proud! Some who hold their heads high with the pride of a haughty spirit, as though they were especially created out of some preferable "dust of the earth," have really nothing to boast of as to ancestry. A very few generations back are generally sufficient for any boaster.

The world is learning that it is not wise to boast of riches, lest thereby some one ask how were the riches accumulated and by whom, and whether they were honestly obtained. Pride of education is not appropriate, either; for education in general signifies the learning of what other people have found out or have written as history. And in our day those who would boast of great education have need of humility lest it be found that the very thing that they are boasting about has been disproven by later researches. Scientific books of the year 1900 will not pass muster today, nor their theories stand in the light of present knowledge. So if it were right to boast of knowledge, the boaster would need to be very careful to keep up to date.

Pride of one's beauty of physical perfection is scarcely to be excused; for the beauty of form and feature came by heredity, and the parent rather than the child might have some reason for pride. Pride as respects clothing, adornments is also foolish. The *maker* of the fabrics or the ornaments might have some reason for pride in the handiwork, but surely the *wearer* has not! He is merely appropriating to himself the skill and labor of others.

SPIRITUAL PRIDE WORST OF ALL.

But our theme is spiritual pride! We would divide it into two classes: first, the spiritual pride of the merely nominal or professing Christian; and second, the spiritual pride affecting true Christians.

The spiritual pride of the nominal church-goer is not all hypocrisy. He sees spiritual forms and ceremonies, hears spiritual songs and sermons, and in many instances is not aware but that he himself is a true Christian, as much so as any. Does he not go regularly to meeting? Is he not a regular contributor, not only to the expenses of the house of worship, but in general to the forwarding of the Lord's cause—charities, etc., as these are presented to him from time to time?

However they have lived during the week, however they have dealt with the butcher and the baker, most churchgoers take a pleasurable pride in joining some of the showy groups moving toward Church buildings. The spiritually proud usually prefer the showiest and most aristocratic and high-toned temples of worship. At the conclusion of the services they feel a self-satisfaction. Have they not worshiped God? Ought not all people to worship Him? How many others have not done so! They feel a spiritual pride or superiority when comparing themselves with non-attendants.

They went not for spiritual instruction; or even if any were given in the places visited, they were not themselves in condition to receive such—not being spirit-begotten. They had no real hunger for righteousness, for truth. They had merely satisfied a feeling of duty. They had in a sense done penance, and hoped that, somehow, sometime it would inure to their advantage—perhaps saving them from some of the worst degrees of purgatorial sufferings—perhaps even making them acceptable for Heaven. Why should not God feel grateful to them for having *denied themselves and wasted a few of their precious* hours to go worship Him?

Although they would not put it so, they feel in a measure that God would be very unjust if He would pass by such a matter and not reward it handsomely. They feel spiritually proud and self-satisfied, and so long as in that condition are not in a particle of danger of getting hold of the Truth. Nor need we suppose that the Great Adversary would especially give his attention to them, for they are very safely under his influence. Was he not the first to manifest pride and to say in his heart, "I will ascend above the sons of God (I will take a higher position than others); I will be as the Most High"?

Spiritual Pride was evidently Satan's great mistake, which led to his complete downfall.

Some who make no pretense of belief in God or in the Lord Jesus Christ or in the Bible have what might be termed a sort of spiritual pride. They pride themselves on living a moral life, on being able to conduct themselves honorably and decently in life—never getting drunk, never doing some of the seriously immoral and perverse things that many others do. In pride and boastfulness they will say: "I feel myself just as good as any church member, and I never go to church." And by this they mean, "I feel myself to be *better* than any church member." They are merely mixing modesty of statement with pride of thought in the proportion which they think will best influence the hearer.

Press the inquiry a little further—as to what good works they especially rejoice in—and they will tell how as "Odd Fellows," "Masons," etc., they sat up one night with a brother of the Order who was not very sick, who did not need very much attention and who had a trained nurse anyway to take care of him; but they felt as though they had been doing a noble work of charity. In general, their pride is that they have not violated the laws; that they have lived decent, respectable lives. Is there really anything in this that is an occasion for pride, for special self-congratulation? What man or woman should not keep the laws and should not be ashamed if he failed to keep the laws—especially when we would remember that those laws were made—not for good people, but for evil-doers?

SPIRITUAL PRIDE IN THE TRUE CHURCH.

Now we come down to the most serious thing of all! The pride which is merely foolish or semi-hypocritical in the world and in the nominal Christians becomes a very serious matter indeed if it invades the heart and the life of the child of God. But why do we make such a difference? Why say that spiritual pride would be so very dangerous in one of the Lord's saints, whereas it would be little more than foolishness in the world? Ah! the difference is that these are God's special representatives in the world, who must become copies of God's dear Son if they would ever attain to the glory, honor and immortality to which they have been invited by the Lord.

When they gave themselves entirely to the Lord and were justified from sin through the imputation of the Redeemer's sacrifice, and were thus introduced into the family of God and begotten of the Holy Spirit, it meant a great change for these. Old things passed away; all things became new. These, and these alone, are on trial during this Gospel Age for eternal life or eternal death. And of all their temptations and beguilements, the sin of spiritual pride is probably one of the most dangerous of all. In proportion as it comes in, the Spirit of the Lord departs, and the spirituality of the individual ceases. This spiritual sickness, unless curbed, would surely lead on to the Second Death, for "the Lord resisteth the proud and showeth His favor to the humble."—James 4:6.

The Apostle Peter evidently had this besetting danger of spiritual pride in mind when he wrote to the Church: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time." (1 Peter 5:6.) "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted," said the Master.

ONE SYMPTOM OF THIS SOUL-SICKNESS.

How may we know spiritual pride? some one may inquire. One of the most serious things in this connection is that THOSE WHO HAVE SPIRITUAL PRIDE VERY RARELY ARE AWARE OF IT. They sometimes have forms of godliness which not only deceive others, but deceive themselves and hinder them from seeing the spiritual pride which is working and which others may more readily see.

When you feel that your attendance at meetings, (or) your reading of so many pages of SCRIPTURE STUDIES per day, . . . are matters to be boasted of—then take care! That disposition to BOAST is an indication that you would be in danger of catching spiritual pride if circumstances were favorable. These are all good and laudable things, all proper things; and you should feel a proper degree of self-congratulation that you find yourself able and willing to turn from the daily newspapers or novel, the reading of chitchat, or the writing of chitchat, to do things so reasonable, so proper, so much in harmony with the Divine will. But any disposition to boast of the matter should lead you to a careful scrutiny of thought—of the motives lying behind these activities in the Lord's service.

We are not meaning to say that it would be improper to give a testimony in which all of these things might be brought forward as an encouragement to others or as a proof that we love the Lord and are anxious to serve Him. What we are cautioning against is a spirit, or disposition, to boast of anything that we might be or do as the Lord's children. We have nothing whereof to boast. If we gave all of our goods to feed the spiritually poor, all our time to circulating the Truth, and all of our energy to the honoring of the Lord's name, we should feel that, having done all, we had not really profited our Lord, but merely found an opportunity of showing Him a little of the devotion of our hearts in acknowledgment of the numberless blessings already received at His hand, and the still more wonderful favors which He has promised shall be ours, if faithful. Well did the poet write:

"I want the first approach to feel
Of pride or fond desire!"

STILL FURTHER SYMPTOMS.

Another form of this disease of spiritual pride manifests itself in a *hypercritical attitude of mind*. When one attends a testimony meeting, or a Berean class, and hears no real good testimony but his own, hears no proper answer except his own to any of the questions, never sees an Elder in the chair who knows how to lead a meeting anyway—these should be considered dangerous symptoms of spiritual pride.

Not that all these things might not *possibly* occur, but they are surely not likely to occur continually. It would be perfectly proper for us to give such attention, and to be so well informed, that we would be able to see quickly any unscriptural proceeding or any instance of very poor judgment that would be a hindrance to the effectiveness of the services. It would be proper, too, if ever we saw that the best interests of the class were not being served—and if, after waiting patiently for a while, we found that they were not likely to be corrected—it would be entirely proper for us, in a meek and quiet spirit, to call attention to the fault, either in the class or to an elder, or whatever would be the most effective and least demonstrative way. "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory," but everything for the glory of God.

And right there we need to be careful, too, LEST WE GET INTO THE WAY OF THINKING THAT EVERYTHING THAT HARMONIZES WITH OUR IDEAS IS TO THE GLORY OF GOD, AND THAT WHATEVER WOULD NOT HARMONIZE WITH OUR

IDEAS COULD NOT BE PLEASING TO HIM. Well did the Apostle write: "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools." (Ephesians 5:15.) Well do we see the meaning of this word "circumspectly"—that it signifies with close scrutiny on every hand, especially as respects thoughts, motives, intentions . . .

GUARDING AGAINST SPIRITUAL PRIDE.

As already indicated, one of the serious things connected with this malady of spiritual pride is that those who have it are *rarely aware of it. Another difficulty is that it is almost IMPOSSIBLE to correct them and to cause THEM to know that they have the disease.* If spoken to on the subject, they seem to think at once that their benefactor is their enemy; that he is jealous of them; that he would like to get their position, etc. Hence the disease is nearly *incurable,* except as either the class may assist or the Lord's providence may interpose.

If the class notices the growth of such a disposition, it should quickly, and with love and good intention, merely fail to elect for any service to the class the individual who seems to be getting top-heavy—spiritually proud. If this were resented, it should be considered all the more a necessity to leave the self-conscious one to cool off quietly and get his bearings—for his own good and that of the class. Where the class fails to help in this matter, apparently nothing remains except for the Lord to chasten the individual for his good, either with business reverses or losses or with physical disease, or in whatever way may seem best to Him. And we have confidence that the Lord will do this for everyone who is truly His child and who gets into such a condition as to need such correction in righteousness. Is it not written, "The Lord will judge (punish) His people"?—Deuteronomy 32:36.

A BIBLE ILLUSTRATION OF THIS SIN.

The Bible gives many illustrations of this sin, but we choose the most conspicuous one. There was a holy man of old, beloved of the Lord, noble, self-sacrificing, a Prophet of the Lord. He served the Lord and His people faithfully—wonderfully—for forty years; but finally he was guilty of this sin of self-assurance—spiritual pride. And, strangest of all, this man is noted to us in the Bible as having been at the beginning of his career the "meekest man in all the earth."—Numbers 12:3.

Yes; it was the glorious Moses, who at the beginning of his experience as a servant of the Lord was so very meek, so very humble, but who, at the conclusion of his career, was hindered from entering the promised land as a punishment for spiritual pride or self-assurance, where he should have given the Lord the glory. We recall the circumstances: Moses, as the Lord's special servant, had led Israel out of Egypt across the Red Sea into the wilderness, en route for Canaan. He performed, by the Lord's direction, several miracles on the journey. One of them was the smiting of the rock when the people were famished for water. God directed him to smite the rock; and from that rock flowed an abundant stream of water for the refreshment of the people.

According to the Bible, that rock was a picture of Christ—the "Rock of Ages." (1 Corinthians 10:4.) It was by the Lord's arrangement that this "Rock of Ages" was smitten, that the water of life might flow from Jesus for all of Adam's race who would become Israelites indeed and come out of Egypt—out of the world—out of sin—out of the kingdom of the Adversary into obedience and fellowship with the Lord.

Forty years after this time of the smiting of the rock, when Israel had been journeying to and fro, waiting for the time to come that they might be permitted to enter Canaan, their wandering led again into this district, so barren and devoid of water. The people cried to Moses and Moses cried to the Lord on their behalf as to what should be done. The Lord's answer was that Moses should *speak* to the rock which previously he had *smitten,* and that water would come forth. But during these forty years in which Moses had dealt with the Israelites as a father with his children, he had naturally gained a great deal of self-assurance. He could hardly pass through such experiences and still be the meekest man in all the earth.

So now, neglecting the command of the Lord, Moses went to the rock and smote it a second time with his rod, shouting to the people: "Ye rebels, must *we* bring you water out of this rock?" (Numbers 20:1-12.) Alas, poor Moses! He was taking the glory to himself instead of ascribing it all to the Lord. Soon Moses realized the great mistake he had made. It might be said to have been his only mistake, and yet the Lord on this account denied him the privilege of going into the land of Canaan, granting him instead merely the opportunity of seeing it from across the River Jordan, and burying him there.

Shall we not from this illustration esteem that spiritual pride and self-assurance are very displeasing in the sight of the Lord? Could we draw any other conclusion from this great lesson written for our admonition?

A WORD OF CONSOLATION.

For the comfort of those who may feel that they have done much worse than Moses, or been much more self-assertive, been much less careful to honor the Lord, have manifested much more spiritual pride—for their comfort let us notice that the punishment here was severe because it was part of a type. As the first smiting of the rock typified the crucifixion of our Lord, so the second smiting of the rock typified the crucifying of the Son of God afresh and putting Him to an open shame; as described by St. Paul in Hebrews 6:6. As the smiting of the rock represented this public, open repudiation of Jesus and His teaching and His cause, so the preventing of Moses from crossing Jordan into Canaan typified the Second Death. We are not to think that Moses will never come into Canaan; nor that he has died the Second Death, but merely that this type was shown in his experiences.

Neither are we to think that brethren who have manifested spiritual pride and done things in their own name, rather than in the name of the Lord and the name of the class, have thereby committed *the* sin unto death. We are, however, to realize that a terrible danger goes with spiritual pride, and that, persisted in, it would surely result in Second Death. Realizing this, how anxious, how zealous we should be, not only in the eradication of every symptom of it we might find in ourselves, but also in being careful lest we should take the contagion or in any manner come under its influence or have any of its symptoms!

SPIRITUAL PRIDE—PREVENTION AND CURE.

We have already intimated the difficulty in connection with the treatment of this disease when once it gets hold. THE CHIEF FEATURE OF THE DIFFICULTY SEEMS TO BE THAT THE DISEASE HAS A *DESTROYING* EFFECT UPON THE *CONSCIENCE,* THE MIND BECOMES MORE OR LESS OBTUSE TO THE SIMPLE PRINCIPLES OF THE GOLDEN RULE—not to mention the still higher law of our Lord's New Commandment to the brethren. THE IGNORING OF THE GOLDEN RULE IS MANIFESTED EVERY TIME AN AT-

TEMPT IS MADE TO COERCE THE CLASS, either in the election of its servants or in the ordering of its meetings.

The regulations of the Lord's Word are known, the residing of the authority in the class is recognized; and when an ELDER ATTEMPTS TO TWIST OR TURN OR ALTER THIS, HE IS NOT DOING TO THE OTHERS AS HE WOULD BE DONE BY. He has a right, as *one of the class,* to his own opinion of the Lord's will on any matter. He has the right to express his judgment. BUT HE HAS NO RIGHT TO HINDER OTHERS FROM THE EXPRESSION OF THEIR JUDGMENT; AND EVERY SUCH INTERFERENCE IS A VIOLATION OF THE GOLDEN RULE, as well as a violation of the Law of Love and a violation of the First Commandment—to honor God; for it is setting aside the Divine arrangement provided for such matters.

But where the Elder progresses along such lines, in defiance of the Golden Rule principle, to the *ruling of the class,* the *coercing or cajoling* of them to the doing *his* way, *his* will, *the effect is the perversion of his own mind.* HIS CONSCIENCE BECOMES OBTUSE. Whoever *violates* his conscience repeatedly, by ignoring the principles of righting a wrong which he clearly sees, that person is *undermining* his conscience.

Conscience is the scale by which we weigh the various things presented to our judgment to ascertain the right or the wrong, the justice or the injustice, the truth or the falsity of a thing. This scale may be a very coarse one or a very fine one. It may be capable of very fine discriminations; or it may see things only in a rude, crude way. The Christian, especially if he has been long in the School of Christ, should have a very sensitive conscience; and from the Word of God he should be able to draw the weights by which he would balance all the questions of the affairs of life, and determine with almost absolute accuracy their right or their wrong—to what extent they would be pleasing or displeasing to the Lord. The *impairment of that scale* is the great danger in every sin, and it seems to us especially so in respect to the sin of spiritual pride. *Nothing much can be done until the scale be rectified.*

How important all of the Lord's people should feel it to be to keep their consciences thoroughly just; to be UNWILLING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF A BROTHER, OR OF ANYBODY, either in business or in an argument or in a Church election! The thought of the slightest infraction of justice on his own part should ring the loudest bells of alarm in the heart and the head of every true child of God: "Could it be that I who have enlisted in this cause of justice should be found sympathetic with injustice? Could it be that I could close my eyes to anything in my own conduct in the nature of injustice? Can it be that I am vitiating my own conscience and shall be liable to all the terrible results?"

To rectify a wrong course would therefore mean the reestablishment of the principles of justice in the hearts and the minds with a carefulness proportionate to the results involved—*life or death everlasting.* As justice shall begin to be reestablished in our minds, it will begin to regulate our words and acts. Gradually, then, the wrong-doer would begin to see how grossly he had violated the principle, how spiritual pride had almost destroyed his future prospects in the Kingdom. To such a one would surely come hearty repentance and thorough resolutions for the future.

THE GREAT NECESSITY FOR SELF-EXAMINATION.

But how shall we safeguard ourselves against this spiritual pride, knowing as we do its insidious character and evil influence? How may we know that we are keeping ourselves in the love of God and not straying away toward spiritual pride?

Our advice is the same that we have already given; viz.—that the Lord's people not only go to Him at the opening of each day and ask for Divine wisdom and supervision, and then through the day seek to live in accordance with that prayer, but additionally at the close of the day we have recommended a special *self-inspection,* as respects the things done, the things neglected that should have been done, and the things done that should not have been done, in accordance with our vows of consecration to the Lord. If these reckonings and balancings every night with the Lord continue, and if they are done honestly, by a conscience that is not perverted, but that balances truly, we may surely expect that such, in harmony with the Lord's Word, will be keeping themselves in the love of God. They will be growing in grace, growing in knowledge, growing in love; and "the Wicked One will not touch them."

But let us not forget that while we are to exercise *great leniency in viewing the words and deeds of others, ascribing only good intentions where they are professed, WE ARE TO SCRUTINIZE WITH ALL OF OUR MIGHT OUR OWN HEARTS,* our own intentions. We are to inquire why we did this thing or left undone the other thing; why we did this thing this way; why we spoke in such a tone, etc. Such a careful examination, weighing of thoughts, words and deeds, would be very unsatisfactory to a person who was not wishing to be in accord with the Lord. But those who have made a covenant with the Lord and are faithful to that covenent, will find such a course to be a great blessing, comforting their hearts at the time, strengthening them for the future, and in connection with the Lord's providences it will be fitting and preparing them for places in the Heavenly Kingdom.—Z. '16, 275-279.

. . . These "strong delusions" will be permitted to demonstrate who have loved and obeyed the Lord's counsel and who, not doing this, are to be adjudged unworthy of the high rewards soon to be given to the "overcomers."—Z. '05, 23.

At no time in the Church's history has our great Adversary been so active . . . in diverting attention from the Truth by introducing unprofitable and irrelevant questions as at present. Just when the exaltation and glory of the Church are soon to be accomplished, and when the faithful are about to be received into the joy of their Lord, every device is resorted to to beguile them of their reward and to frustrate this feature of the Divine Plan. To really frustrate any part of the Divine Plan is impossible.—Z. '16, 307.

Nothing could induce us to part with that knowledge of God and His Plan in which we rejoice today. . . . That which makes the Lord's people appear happy is not especial beauty on the outside, but the light on the inside, the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, the Light of the Knowledge of the Divine Truth in our hearts. This light shining through these earthen vessels is heart-cheering and comforting. We cannot imagine anything better. As the poet says,

"It satisfies my longings, as nothing else can do."
—Z. '14, 329.

THE HIGH CALLING NOT FOR ALL

No man, however, takes this step of consecration unless he is called of God. There must be the call, or invitation, as there was with Aaron and with our Lord Jesus Christ. (Heb. 5:4, 5.) This call (the High Calling) comes through the proclamation of the Gospel. Each must hear for himself before he can accept. "And how shall they *hear* without a *preacher?*" (Rom. 10:14.) So then, it is for God to begin the work with the unjustified by drawing *them to Christ for justification; and it is for our Lord* Jesus Christ to continue this work with the consecrated. Furthermore, it is the privilege of all who come into God's family to proclaim these truths to others, to set forth the terms by which those who receive the call may accept it, while still "it is called today," before this Age of sacrifice ends.—Heb. 4:7; 2 Cor. 6:2.

None come to God in this Gospel Age except those who make a sacrifice. Others may *turn* toward God; they may *look* toward God; they may be converted from a wicked life to a better one. But none except the class who are adopted into God's family are begotten of the Holy Spirit. The invitation of this Age is NOT an invitation to do *the best one can;* we are all called in the *one hope* of our calling. (Eph. 4:4.) "Gather My saints together unto Me, saith the Lord, those who have made a covenant with Me by *sacrifice.*"—Psa. 50:5.

It is good not to do wrong. But more than a righteous life is required of those who would be *sons of God.* *CONSECRATION* HAS *ALWAYS* BEEN PROPER; IT IS THE *NORMAL ATTITUDE* FOR ALL OF GOD'S INTELLIGENT CREATURES. *The Creator is the One to whom all are properly under obligations for every blessing which they enjoy; and heart, mind, tongue and hand should be ready for consecration to do the Father's will. Whether angels or MEN or New Creatures in Christ—all should be in this attitude.*

Since consecration is the only reasonable attitude, then, when the one hundred and forty-four thousand of the Elect Church shall have passed their testing IT WILL STILL BE APPROPRIATE FOR GOD TO PERMIT PEOPLE TO CONSECRATE, AND TO BE PLEASED WITH THEIR CONSECRATION. Therefore, we may expect that, in the end of the reign of Christ, all the worthy ones shall have made consecration to God. It was thus in the Jewish Age, although there was no "high calling" then, nor privilege to understand the deep things of God.

The privilege of becoming joint-heirs with Christ will end as soon as the Elect number is completed. During the thousand years of Christ's reign, those who consecrate will come to understand all human things; but not being begotten of the Holy Spirit, they cannot understand the things of the Spirit.—Z. '12, 358.

CONSECRATION BETWEEN THE AGES

. . . The Lord is very pitiful and of great mercy, and hence, we may expect that so long as any shall abide in the attitude of faith the Lord will not wholly reject them.

What would be the remedy for those who find themselves in this attitude, and desire to be fully the Lord's and fully to claim his favors? We answer that their course should be to make a full consecration of themselves to the Lord, surrendering to him their wills in respect to all things—their aims, their hopes, their prospects, their means, and even their earthly loves should all be surrendered to the Lord; and in exchange they should accept, as the law of their being and the rule for future conduct, the guidance of His Word and Spirit and Providences; assured that these will work out for them, not only more glorious results as respects the life to come, but also greater blessings of heart in the present life.

How shall they do this? We answer that it should be done heartily, reverently, in prayer—the contract should be definitely made with the Lord and, if possible, in an audible voice; and divine grace, mercy and blessing should be requested as needful assistance in the carrying out of this sacrifice.

And what should be done if any are "feeling after God," yet do not feel fully ready to make this complete surrender to His will? We answer that they should go to the Lord in prayer about the matter and ask His blessing upon the study of Truth, that they might be enabled more and more to realize, first, the reasonableness of the service; secondly, the sureness of the blessing to result; and, thirdly, his faithfulness in keeping all the gracious promises of help and strength made to the self-sacrificing class. They should ask also that the Lord would enable them rightly to weigh and value earthly things—that they might be enabled to realize and, if necessary, to experience, how transitory and unsatisfactory are all things connected with the selfishness of this present time, and those things after which the natural mind craves;—that they might thus be able to make a consecration and to appreciate the privilege of setting their affections upon things above and not on things beneath, and of sacrificing the latter for the former.

. . . *In view of the fact that the "high Calling" is closed, and that, therefore, the consecrating one could not be fully assured of an opportunity to attain to the prize of the new nature and its glory, honor and immortality—what difference would this make in respect to the consecration? WE ANSWER THAT IT SHOULD MAKE NO DIFFERENCE: CONSECRATION IS THE ONLY REASONABLE, PROPER COURSE FOR THE LORD'S PEOPLE ANYWAY;—full consecration will be required of those who would live and enjoy the blessings of the Millennial age—nothing short of it.* As for the opportunities and rewards to accrue: we have already pointed out that, to our understanding, many will yet be admitted to the privileges of the "high calling," (written in A. D. 1904) to take the places of some who have already consecrated but will not "so run as to obtain" the prize, and will, therefore, be counted out of the race. But none, we may be sure, will be admitted to those privileges unless first they have entered this low gate of consecration and sacrifice.

It has probably been true of all who have entered the low gate, that they did not see clearly and understand fully the great and rich blessings which God has in store for His faithful New Creation; they merely saw, at first, the reasonable service, and afterwards learned more concerning the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of God's goodness and their high-calling privileges. So with those now entering: they cannot fully appreciate the heavenly, spiritual things until first they have reached the point of performing their reasonable service in a full consecration. And *we may be sure that any consecrating and* *performing a full sacrifice of themselves in the interests of the Lord's cause AFTER the heavenly class is complete, will find that the Lord has plenty of blessings of some other kind still to give and that all of His blessings are for such consecrators, self-sacrificers. Possibly they may be counted in with the ancient worthies who had the sacrificing disposition that is pleasing to God, prior to the beginning of the "high calling."*—F. 155, 156, 157.

It is our thought that with the closing of the "door" of this Gospel Age there will be no more begetting of the Holy Spirit to the spirit nature. ANY AFTERWARD COMING TO GOD THROUGH CONSECRATION, BEFORE THE INAUGURATION OF THE RESTITUTION WORK, WILL BE ACCEPTED BY HIM, not to the spirit plane of being, but to the earthly plane. Such would come in under the same conditions as the Ancient Worthies who were accepted of God. The Ancient Worthies came in, NO CALL BEING OPENED TO THEM—the High Calling not being yet open, and the RESTITUTION OPPORTUNITIES NOT OPEN. *But they freely gave themselves up to God without knowing what blessings their consecration would bring, except that they had the intimation that they would, in the future life, have a "better resurrection" than would the remainder of the world.*

Our thought is that whoever under such conditions as these will make a full consecration to the Lord, to leave all to follow in His ways, and will live up faithfully, loyally, to that consecration, may be privileged to be counted as a similar class to those who preceded this Gospel Age. WE KNOW OF NO REASON WHY THE LORD WOULD REFUSE TO RECEIVE THOSE WHO MAKE A CONSECRATION AFTER THE CLOSE OF THE GOSPEL AGE AND ITS HIGH CALLING AND BEFORE THE FULL OPENING OF THE MILLENNIAL AGE. Z. '15, 269, 270.

BAPTISM IN THE NEXT AGE

We have no *reason* to think that baptism will be practiced in the New Dispensation. *We have no Scriptures* that tell us it will be introduced. *Yet it will not be surprising if it shall be re-established; for baptism is a very beautiful picture of consecration to God, the full giving of the life to His service. It may be introduced as a symbol of washing away sin or as a symbol of consecration.* What we do not *know* we think it best not to discuss. We do see that the Church was baptized into Christ by being baptized into His death; and that baptism is, therefore, to the Christian, a symbol of death. But it need not be a symbol of death always. This beautiful figure might be transmuted to signify a baptism into the family of Christ, a manifestation of the adoption of this new Father, in contradistinction to the old Father, Adam—a rising to newness of life through the Lord Jesus Christ. We should not be surprised if this would be the case, but it is not wise to speculate in advance. It is better to leave those matters not yet clear, until the Lord shall open them up fully.

John's Baptism was called by that name because John was the first one who used baptism; and he, as the forerunner of Christ, used it to do a preparatory work. Not only John and his disciples, but also Jesus and His disciples, practiced this baptism among the Jews. (John 4:1-3.) This rite called to repentance of sin and the getting into harmony with the Messiah who was about to come. It was very necessary that Jesus should be recognized as the great Anointed One; for although His baptism was to bring the Jews back into accord with Moses, into harmony with the Law, nevertheless it was to prepare them to accept the Messiah.

The baptism of Jews after Pentecost was the same—for the remission of sins; but they had charged against them, in addition to their other sins of unfaithfulness, the crucifixion of the Prince of Life. Many acknowledged their guilt when they realized what had been done. They saw that the whole nation was guilty of what the people had done through their rulers, the high priest, the under priests, the Sanhedrin, the Scribes, the Pharisees and the Doctors of the Law.

Those Jews who were contrite of heart were prompted to ask what they should do to escape the condemnation which was upon the whole people. St. Peter answered, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." In a measure extenuating their sin of crucifying the Messiah, he said, "I wot, brethren, that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory." (Acts 2:37, 38; 3:13-15, 17.) He reminded them that they were the children of the promises; and that as Israelites they had a special claim on this arrangement which God had made through His Anointed Son, in that it must come to them *first;* and that their repentance would bring them forgiveness and remission of sins.

The Apostle was not speaking, however, of a new immersion into the Body of Christ which would be applicable only to Gentiles; for Gentiles could not be received in the same way, by remission of sins and a restitution to God's favor under the Jewish Law arrangement to which they had never been subject. Gentiles had never sinned against the Law; therefore they could not be dealt with as the Jews.

WAS JOHN'S BAPTISM CHRISTIAN BAPTISM?

Again, it is asked, Was the baptism of John Christian Baptism? If not, when did Christians begin to baptize with the Christian baptism? We reply, John's Baptism was not Christian baptism, but merely a baptism for the washing away of sins, as we have shown. Few of those baptized by John knew anything about Christ. It could not, therefore, have been a Christian baptism. However, it would *amount* to Christian baptism to the Jews who observed it, because by coming back into Moses and recognizing Christ as the antitype of Moses, they would thus be transferred into Christ after Pentecost.

But Christian baptism to the Gentiles was a new thing. It symbolized the grafting of wild olive branches into the Israelitish olive tree. It was an immersion of aliens into the Body of Messiah, making them fellow-members with the Jews of the twelve tribes of Spiritual Israel, whose entire number was to be 144,000—twelve thousand from each tribe. (Revelation 2:9; 3:9; 7:1-8; 14:1-5.) Those taken from among the Gentiles were the wild olive branches grafted into the good olive tree, making up the number which lacked to complete this Body of Christ.

SHOULD WATER BAPTISM BE PRACTISED NOW?

Some friends seem to have been in doubt as to whether it is proper to practise water baptism since October 1st, 1914—and if so, as to what words should be used by the administrator in immersing the candidate, especially if he has but lately made a consecration.

To this we reply; *firstly,* Just when the membership of the Body of Christ will be consummated is not a matter that we are capable of determining with positiveness. Up to that time we may be sure that any one presenting himself in the proper way was eligible. *Secondly,* Some of those who now present themselves for immersion have made complete consecration previously; they may be symbolizing a consecration made five, ten or twenty years ago. *THIRDLY,* EVEN IF WE WERE SURE THAT THE BODY OF CHRIST IS NOW COMPLETED, WE SEE NO REASON WHY CONSECRATION TO GOD SHOULD NOT BE SYMBOLIZED BY WATER BAPTISM; FOR THIS RITE REPRESENTS THE SURRENDER AND BURIAL OF THE INDIVIDUAL WILL INTO THE WILL OF THE LORD, AND THIS IS THE PROPER COURSE FOR EVERY ONE TO TAKE. We could not imagine a different course for all to take during the Millennial Age. The difference will be that the Lord will not accept them then to a change of nature, but to His favor under the Restitution privileges of that Dispensation, an uplift to perfect human nature on the earth.

Those who will come into harmony with God's arrangements for the world during the Millennium, now about to dawn, are to be the children of Christ—He is spoken of as their "Everlasting Father" their Lifegiver. He is not the Father of the Gospel Church, but their Elder Brother. They are the children of God. The life that will be given to the world will be the earthly life, the kind which Jesus surrendered on their behalf They are referred to in 1 Cor., chapter 15, as they that are His, who become His, during the thousand years of His presence.

The Common Version rendering is obscure. Verse 23 should read, "But every man in his own order: the anointed First-fruits; afterward, they that are Christ's in His presence"—during His Parousia, the thousands years of Christ's Reign. "Then cometh the end, when He (Christ) shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God even the Father," "that God may be all in all." (Verses 24-28.) All of the restored world will belong to the general family of Christ. Jesus the Bridegroom and the Church His Bride will have the regenerated human family as their children on the earthly plane of being. Mankind will become Christ's children by the consecration of themselves. The Father's will for them will not be the spirit nature, but human restitution to all that was lost in Adam.

FOR ALL THESE REASONS WE SEE THAT IT IS PROPER THAT WE SHOULD MAKE NO CHANGE *AT THIS TIME* EITHER IN THE SYMBOLIC BAPTISM OR IN THE LANGUAGE USED IN CONNECTION WITH THE SAME. WE THINK IT A FITTING PICTURE OF CONSECRATION TO GOD AND HIS SERVICE ON WHATEVER PLANE OF LIFE ONE MAY SPEND ETERNITY, WHETHER SPIRITUAL OR EARTHLY. Z. '16, 293, 294.

THE FAMILY NAME.

It is evident that all through the Gospel age baptism into Christ has symbolized union with him and membership in the one body—the bride. But now in the harvest or lapping of the Gospel and Millennial ages, a new question arises, viz., While it is still appropriate for all of this class who have not done so, to confess Christ by this symbol, what about others, of the restitution class, who shall now confess Christ and desire to consecrate themselves—to relinquish their wills and have the will of Christ only? Seeing that such will sooner or later apply for baptism as a symbol, and that it would be a proper symbol of consecration for others as well as for the Body of Christ, and that it is not incumbent upon us to decide to which class those belong who apply to us for immersion—the question arises, Would the same form of words be appropriate for both?

We answer, Yes; for though the class referred to will not be of the bride of Christ, they will be of the Christ family—children of the Christ; and it is proper for children to bear their father's name. Christ is to be the "Everlasting Father" or life-giver to the restored human race; and hence it will not be improper for them also to take His name. Therefore, *as we now view it,* it will be proper to baptize such *into the name of Christ;* and we doubt not that all of the world who shall come into harmony and receive the gift of life from the Life-giver in the next age, will also be known as Christians. As before pointed out, however, the *words* of the immerser cannot affect favorably or unfavorably the interests of the immersed; the importance rests in the obedience of the act and what it signifies of consecration to the one immersed. —Z. '93, 189, 190.

THE OMNIPOTENCE OF JEHOVAH

To say that God is *all* Power is sophistry of language which often misleads the one questioning as well as the one attempting to answer him. The statement is not correct. If God is all Power, then He is not Love or Justice or Wisdom. He would thus be limited to the one great attribute of Power, or force. Such cannot be the thought entertained by any logical mind. It is, nevertheless, a form of statement that is often used, perhaps unintentionally, but very injuriously to the reasoning faculties.

The Bible nowhere says God is all Power. There is a marked difference between *being* power and *exercising* power. God is all-powerful. He has the ability to exercise power *in any* direction to the extent that He *wills.* If He had chosen, He could have so created Satan that he could not think or do other than in harmony with the Divine will; or He could have exercised His power to crush the Adversary and thus have destroyed him long ago. But He has permitted Satan to exist for six thousand years, in the sense that He does not restrain the Devil from doing evil. The Scriptures, however, tell us that God will eventually destroy him.

The scope of the exercise of Divine Power is the Universe, but it is difficult for our finite minds to comprehend the meaning of this word—*Universe.* Astronomers tell us that by the aid of photo-astronomy they can see nearly 125,000,000 suns—the centers of solar systems like our own, with supposedly more than a billion of planets more or less like our earth. These, we may assume, are in process of development, are in preparation for inhabitants, whom the great Creator will in due time provide. From the Scriptural standpoint, however, the great work of human creation began with our earth. What a boundless thought we have in the mere suggestion that the billion worlds are to be peopled, and that the lessons of righteousness and sin, of life and death eternal, now being taught to humanity, will never need to be repeated!

We stand appalled at the immensity of space and at the law and order which everywhere reign! We heartily assent to the words of the Prophet David, "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard." (Psalm 19:2, 3.) The person who can look upon this wonderful display of superhuman power and believe that these worlds created themselves, shows to the majority of us that, if he has brains, they are sadly disordered, unbalanced. Whoever, after mature thought, concludes that there is no God, that everything came to be what it is by chance or by the operation of some blind force—that person is described in the Scriptures in the following words, "The fool hath said in his heart. There is no God."—Psalm 14:1.

As scientific instruments demonstrate to us the immensity of the Universe, we perceive that the Prophet used very moderate language indeed in his description of the majestic power and greatness of the Creator, when he represents Jehovah as weighing the mountains in His balance and holding the seas in the hollow of His hand. (Isaiah 40:12.) From His standpoint, a thousand years are but as a watch in the night. (Psalm 90:4.) How insignificantly small we all feel in the presence of our God! No wonder some great men are inclined to say that humanity is too insignificant from the Divine standpoint to be worthy of the least consideration—much less to be objects of Divine care and providence!

THE OMNISCIENCE OF JEHOVAH.

To say that God is all *Knowledge* is also an inaccurate statement. If God were all Knowledge, how could He be all Power? God *has* all Knowledge, possesses all Knowledge. But this is a different matter. If we say, "The boy has a hoop," we do not mean that *he* is a hoop. To *be* a hoop and to *have* a hoop are not the same. God is *omniscient;* that is, He *knows all things*. This very fact proves that He is a personal God. There can be no knowledge without personality. Knowledge implies cognizance of external things. Amongst the things outside the Divine Person are things both good and evil.

When we read that God created man in His own image and likeness (Genesis 1:26, 27), we may know that man is not God. He was merely made in the *image* of God. Because God is perfect, therefore the human being made in His image would be satisfactory to God. That human being had knowledge. But he neglected the Word of God, and thus he learned something by his neglect. What he learned is mentioned in the Scriptures. "He is become as one of Us (the *Elohim*), to know good and evil." (Genesis 3:22.) This statement proves that God knows good and evil."

If God did not know evil from good, then He could not be our Instructor. By His laws, His principles, God sets before our minds that which is right and that which is wrong. Adam knew how to discriminate between right and wrong, but his disobedience increased his knowledge of both good and evil. In his fallen condition man cannot always determine between them. Therefore God gave Israel a Law, and man's knowledge of that Law assists him to discriminate between good and evil.

One of old time said, "Thou art a God which hidest Thyself." (Isa. 45:15.) How true! As a result the world by wisdom knows not God. He is near in His Wisdom and Love, yet He can be seen only by those whose eyes of understanding have been opened. But we are glad that the time is coming when all the blind eyes shall see clearly. "As truly as I live," says Jehovah, "all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Num. 14:21; Hab. 2:14.) Then all shall see what God hath wrought, and our temporary blindness will but accentuate the glorious brightness of His Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power.

"GOD IS LOVE,"

God is Love in the sense that the term Love represents the central principle of the Divine character. There is nothing contrary to love in God. The Scriptures do not teach that there is nothing except love anywhere—that God is everywhere and love is everywhere. But they teach that God is a loving character. This does not militate against the other statements that God is just, wise and powerful. But this quality of Love best of all represents the Divine Being. All of His Justice is in harmony with His love. There is no exercise of Justice or Power in an evil sense, for all His attributes work together for good to all His creatures.

The Scriptures encourage us to reason from the known to the unknown. They tell us that although God is so great, so wise, so powerful, He is also just and loving. And the more we consider the matter, the more reasonable the Bible description of the Almighty appears. His Power we see demonstrated. The Wisdom of One so great cannot be doubted. When we come to consider, Could One so wise and so powerful be unjust or ungenerous? Our hearts answer, No! No one is really great who is devoid of justice and love. So surely as our God is Jehovah, He must possess these qualities.

When we came in contact with the Bible, and particularly after we learned something of its teachings and got rid of the misrepresentations which gathered about it during the Dark Ages—then we began to recognize it as the Message of Jehovah to His creatures. It informs us that the great Creator of the Universe is not only Almighty and All-wise, but loving and kind, with Justice as the foundation of His Empire. (Psalm 89:13, 14.) From the Bible we learn, too, that our Creator has been pleased to make us in His own image, in His own moral likeness, to the intent that we may enjoy Him and the fruits of His righteousness to all eternity. . . .

THE PERMISSION OF EVIL.

From only one standpoint can Divine Wisdom and Love be discerned in connection with the history of mankind. It must include the Age about to be ushered in—the period of Messiah's reign of righteousness. This will be the time when every member of Adam's race, sharing the penalty of sin and death because inheriting his weaknesses, will be set free from these; the time when the full knowledge of the glory of God shall be granted to every human being, and when a full opportunity will come to each, by obedience, to gain life everlasting.

The lesson thus far taught is the goodness and the severity of God—His goodness in bringing us into being, and His severity in the punishment of Father Adam's wilful transgression; also to both men and angels, Justice, *unswerving* Justice. The next lesson to be taught to God's intelligent creatures is that God is Love. The foundation for these lessons is already laid in the Ransom-sacrifice of Jesus, through and on account of which He becomes the world's Redeemer and Restorer. A few can believe this Message by faith; but not many have the ear of faith or the eye of faith. Only the saints are able to appreciate this great fact at the present time.

That which is now secret and understood only by the few is shortly to be made manifest to every creature in heaven and in earth. All will then see and be able to appreciate the great fact that the redemption accomplished by the sacrifice of Jesus is world-wide and means a full deliverance from the sin-and-death condemnation which passed upon Adam and all of his race, to all who will accept the same as a gift from God. The remainder will be destroyed in the Second Death.

THE SECOND DEATH THE ESSENCE OF WISDOM.

As for the Second Death, we easily see that if God created man in His own image, man must of necessity be a free moral agent; otherwise he would not be in God's image. If he was created a free moral agent, he must have the power or privilege to will wrong as well as right. If he exercise his power in the direction of evil, God has the power to destroy him. On the other hand, if he live in harmony with righteousness, God has the power to grant him life to all eternity.

The destruction of the wicked in the Second Death is the essence of Wisdom. As to the declaration that God is too pure to behold evil (Habakkuk 1:13), the thought of the original seems to be that God's character is so pure and so righteous that He will not continue to behold evil. He will not permit evil to exist to all eternity, for this condition would not be pleasing to Him.

This very thought implies that there is evil to behold. If not so, how could He behold it? But this is all consistent with the Divine Plan. Ultimately all evil shall be destroyed. Ultimately all creatures which are "in heaven and on earth and such as are in the sea" shall be heard saying, "Blessing and honor and glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."—Revelations 5:13. Z. '13, 101, 102, 103.

. . . As we are now in the sifting and testing time, it must not surprise us if some who once saw eye to eye with us in these matters become blind to them and drift into the "outer darkness" as respects these matters and others—we know not how far. Truths so interweave that one lost or perverted injures presently the beauty of the entire fabric.—Z. '09, 155.

THY SHIELD AND THY REWARD

"After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield and thine exceeding great reward." Gen. 15:1.

These words were addressed to the "father of the faithful," and as a heritage they descend to his children to all those who are of the faith of Abraham (Gal. 3:7; Rom. 4:16), whether of the fleshly or the spiritual seed. Abram had entered into covenant relationship with God. God had called him to separate himself from his native country and kindred and friends to follow the course of his providential leadings toward an unknown land. And Abram, in full reliance on the promise of God, had obediently severed the familiar social and business ties, and, with his wife and family and father and nephew who shared his faith and obedience to God, started on his pilgrimage to the unknown land. And having entered the land and received the promise—"All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it and to thy seed forever," etc. —though he was not then permitted to own a foot of it, he wandered up and down in it as a pilgrim and stranger, encountering difficulties, too, in coming in contact with the godless inhabitants of the land and with the Egyptians, yet always believing that what God had promised he was able and willing also to perform in his own good time and way.

But that which taxed Abram's faith most was that, as the years rolled by, not only was the promise of the land delayed, but also the promised heirs who should inherit it; for not even one heir had yet come.

It was in one of these seasons of discouragement—though not of despair, for Abram never relaxed his faith, but trusted and hoped still when in darkness and perplexity—that God in a vision graciously encouraged his fainting heart with the above words of cheer and hope—"Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield and thine exceeding great reward." Then Abram was permitted to inquire into the mysterious ways of God and received the renewed assurance that the promise had not been forgotten, and that his hope would certainly be realized.

We find a very similar fatherly providence in the case of Jacob, who also, in the faith of Abraham, had forsaken all to follow the Lord's leading. In a time of great perplexity and trial of faith the Lord appeared to him in a vision prophetic of the future glory of his Kingdom and of the communication of its heavenly and earthly phases, and again confirmed his covenant unto him (Gen. 28:10-15); and Jacob arose from his sleep on the stony pillow, bearing in mind the bright vision of the Kingdom glory—of the messengers of God ascending and descending upon the ladder suspended 'twixt earth and heaven—refreshed and comforted, saying, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. . . . This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."—Gen. 28:16-19.

Thus God has always been watchful over his people, never suffering them to be tempted or tried beyond their power of endurance, yet permitting them often to be very severely tested. The consolation here offered to Abraham is that offered to all who are of the faith of Abraham, and its parallel in the New Testament is that precious statement of our Lord (John 14:21-23), "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him, . . . and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." So in the midst of all the temptations and trials that beset us in our earthly pilgrimage, while we walk by faith toward the blessed inheritance reserved for the overcoming saints, we also may recognize the voice of our God, saying, "Fear not: I am thy shield, and thine exceeding great reward."

"Fear not," beloved; "there is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment" (I John 4:18); "If God be for us, who can be against us?" or "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" Say in your heart as did Paul, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus."—Rom. 8:31-39.

Do hosts of foes oppose themselves—place obstacles in your way, hinder your influence and seek to dishearten you by heaping upon you reproaches, and do circumstances seem to conspire against you to fill your heart with alarm and dread? say to your soul, "Fear not," "hope thou in God," and mark his loving providences as—

"Through waves and clouds and storms,
He gently clears thy way,"—

until a blessed acquaintance with God through such experiences develops in the heart that perfect love that casteth out fear. Then shall you enter more and more fully into the blessed rest of faith, and like the eagle that soars above the storm cloud, live at such an altitude of Christian experience as to enable you to rejoice in the Lord always and in everything to give thanks.

"Fear not, I am thy shield," saith Jehovah. Then "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God." He would not have one of his children live in an atmosphere of tormenting fear, but would have them happy and always rejoicing in the glorious liberty of the sons of God, free from all fear and corroding care by simply trusting in him, ever remembering the blessed promise—"The Lord Jehovah is a sun and shield (to shine upon our pathway and into our hearts and to protect us from all the fiery darts of the wicked): the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly."—Psa. 42:5; 84:11.

"I am (also) thy exceeding great reward." Notice, the promise is not put in the future tense, having reference to the promised glory of his people in the ages to come; but it is present, "I am," etc. Yes, the abiding presence of God, manifested to the hearts of his people now, even today, in the midst of its cares, its vexations, its labors, its trials of faith, patience and endurance, this is the blessed present privilege of all his saints. And not only the presence of God, but also of his dear Son, our Lord and Savior, is also vouchsafed to us so long as we faithfully maintain our covenant relations with him.

Should the child of God, the heir of glory, the inheritor of all the exceeding great and precious promises, and the present companion of Divinity itself which condescends to our low estate, ever feel desolate or forsaken or alone? or fear that his love will ever forsake or leave him to be tossed helplessly upon the billows of misfortune at the mercy of the prince of this world who now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience? Ah, no! Greater is he that is for us than all they that can be against us. We are not alone in the world; for we have the blessed promise. "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5). Nor is the smallest interest of ours overlooked.—Matt. 10:29-31.

How truly *"exceeding great"* is this present "reward" of the faithful saints who are daily and hourly walking with God—going about the Father's business, spreading abroad the honor of his name, meekly bearing the reproaches of Christ, enduring hardness as good soldiers in his service and taking up their cross daily and following in the Master's footprints. Truly we can say to the world, as did our Lord, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." The world cannot comprehend our joy, nor know the sweets of this fellowship with God and with his dear Son; for "The secret of the Lord is (only) with them that fear him."—Psa. 25:14.

This joy in the Lord is, however, also compatible with much suffering; for the saints are all to be made perfect through suffering, which was true also of those who shall constitute the earthly phase of the Kingdom. And, like their Lord, Christ Jesus, they will all be considered of the world as "smitten of God and afflicted." This is because the world cannot comprehend either the plan or methods of God for the refining and perfecting of the gold that shall by and by shine in the glorious Temple of God. Consequently, like faithful Abraham, we must be content to walk with God by faith and not by sight, like him hoping to the end for the promise, not expecting here to realize aught but the earnest of our inheritance, which we have in the present reward of the divine presence and approval.—Z. '95, 287, 288.

If we maintain our purity of *heart* by purity of *mind,* we may have the assurance of future blessings as well as of present favor and happiness. If this be our course in "the life that now is," we have the Lord's promise that we shall see Him in a very special sense in the life "which is to come."—Z. '12, 390.

THE MESSENGERS OF GOD IN THE LAST DAYS

"He shall give His angels (messengers) a charge concerning thee, to guard thee in all thy ways." Psalm 91:11.

IN THE MIDST of the "perilous times" of this "evil day," and of the warning voices of the Holy Prophets and Apostles pointing out snares and pestilences and subtle dangers on every hand and in the midst, too, of a realizing sense of the actual existence of such evil besetments and perils—how precious to the saints are the assurances of Divine protection and care and personal love!

Evidently the person referred to in our text as giving a charge, or message, is Jehovah, the Heavenly Father. The Prophet David is prophesying in respect to some person, then future. That person was primarily, we believe, the Lord Jesus Christ; and secondarily, all those whom He has accepted as members of His Body throughout the Gospel Age—the Messiah class, Head and members. The words imply a special care of God over this class. All through the Scriptures they are referred to as those whom God specially loves and specially cares for. Our Lord Jesus is the Only Begotten, the Well-beloved Son, and all those who are His members are peculiarly loved. Jesus said to some of His faithful disciples, "The Father Himself loveth you."

The charge given to the angels we would understand to have a very broad application. The Apostle Paul assures us that the angels of God are ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto and to serve those who shall be heirs of salvation, the saved ones of the Gospel Age. Yes, all of these, because believers in Christ, because at heart faithful, because fully consecrated to the Lord and begotten of His Spirit, are the special and happy objects of His grace, ministered to and served by the invisible messengers. Our Lord Jesus sets forth practically the same thought in His declaration, "Their angels do always behold (have access to) the face of My Father." The Master's words seem to imply that one or more of these angels have charge over the consecrated ones, the Very Elect.

Our Lord uses a different figure of speech from that of the Apostle, as though He would assure us that these messengers would not be delayed in caring for our interests. They would not be hindered by more important Heavenly business, but would at once have direct access to the Divine presence and attention, so that our interests would have all needed consideration. Our Lord would have us realize that we are of the House of Sons, under Himself the chief Son, hence no time is lost in bringing our interests to the Father. Our interests have first place, our angels have *always* access to the Father. Before we speak, He knows our minds. Before we realize our own necessities. He has made provision for them. A wonderful watch-care has been arranged. It is hard for us to understand how the Almighty God can give such particular care and attention to our needs. Instead of being puffed up that God has manifested such loving consideration towards us, it should make us feel how little we are, how unworthy of such blessings.

Although the Father makes such use of Heavenly messengers, this by no means invalidates the thought that the Lord's earthly children are frequently used of Him as ministers, servants, the one of another. Indeed, we may be assured that the invisible messengers are required generally to act through human instrumentalities. . . .

The Apostle Paul has stated that the Lord makes His ministers, or servants, a flaming fire, and intimates to us that any and every agency and power that Divine providence uses is a part of that care over His People. (Heb. 1:7.) In other words, every agency used of God—whether it be fire or electricity or man, or whatever—would be a messenger of God. And whatever would not be to His praise and work out what He chooses, He is able to restrain—as He tells us—Psalm 76:10.

OVERCOMERS DEVELOPED BY TRIAL.

These angels are to "keep thee in all thy ways"—not only in all the affairs of the Church, both individually and collectively, but also in all times; it was kept during the Dark Ages as well as at other times. But this care will not keep us from temptation. None can be of this elect Church unless they have trials. In order to have the overcoming qualities of heart they must have the tests. But the Lord's promised grace is to be with them for their assistance—not to overcome for them, but to sustain them. His grace is sufficient for us. He does not make up for a poor will; but he does make up for imperfect bodies. If the will is poor, He does not want such in His elect Church. He wants His people to be strong in will—nothing doubting—overcomers. . . .

The question is, why should not the angels have charge over all good people, so that they would not stumble? Is not this the promise? We answer that the promise is made to all who are of the elect class. But in order to remain members of this Body, they must all stand the trial. It will be a test. Are they willing to have the assistance of the angels — messengers? Are they willing to surmount these difficulties and to remain in the way? . . .

. . . *"It will be only the Body members who will be lifted up by the messengers and carried safely through the trials and difficulties which will be permitted to test the love, loyalty and obedience to the will of God, of all who have made with Him a Covenant of Sacrifice—even unto death.*—Z. '13, 182-183.

"No man can serve two masters." Hence to serve the Lord with all our mind, soul and strength, to render Him His dues, means to put ourselves crosswise with the views and sentiments of the world. This is the real test of Christion character. Only such as stand this test of "GOD FIRST," loyalty to the principles which He inculcates, can hope to be members of the Kingdom class which is now being selected.—Z. '14, 236.

PEACE WITH GOD AND THE PEACE OF GOD

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 5:1.
Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee. Isa. 26:3.

TO HAVE come into a condition of Peace with God means that one has become reconciled to God. This implies a former condition of alienation, of "enmity through wicked works." Peace with God, then, means that this estrangement from God is a thing of the past, and that the estranged one is now in harmony with God—that he has turned his back upon sin and is seeking to walk in the path of righteousness. This is a step of faith, and is accompanied by reformation of life. We rejoice with all who have come thus far; we are glad that they have this position of advantage over the masses of mankind whom the god of this world has so blinded that they cannot see the beauty of the Lord nor the desirableness of peace with Him, and who have not learned the bitterness of the fruits of sin.

But in our second text above, the Prophet is referring to a class who have gone further than the condition of peace *with* God. He is speaking of a class who have come into possession of "the peace *of* God," which passeth all understanding, as the Apostle Paul declares. This peace can come only to those who have given themselves unreservedly to God—their time, their talents, their influence, their life, their *all*. *These* have a peace that none others can know. This peace of God rules the heart even amid turmoil and trouble; it is an inward tranquility and rest which is the direct result of a close, personal relationship of the soul with God. It is the peace *of* God because it is a peace that God only can give, a peace which only His very own can fully know.

What a precious legacy our dear Lord left with His disciples when He went away from them! He said: "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you; let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27.) This was truly a legacy of priceless value, and it is the inheritance of the entire Church throughout the Age, even unto its close. To the world it may seem that the course of the Christian is far from peaceful, for the Lord's saints often have a stormy voyage. But if our hearts continue to be stayed on Christ by faith, and we do not let go our anchor, we shall be kept through all the tempests of life, however severely we may be tossed, however fiercely the storms may rage.

Faith can exclaim with the Prophet Isaiah, "For the Lord will help me, therefore I shall not be confounded; therefore have I set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." (Isa. 50:7.) On the assurances of the Lord we may rest, because our anchor holds fast to the Throne of God. The language of our Master's heart was, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee; but I have known Thee." He had been with the Father from the beginning and He knew His love and goodness; He had seen the manifestations of His power; He had marked His loving kindness. So we who have come into similar relationship to God have come to thus know and trust His love and faithfulness.

PEACE IN THE LORD.

The Lord does not bless His people with peace in an outward sense. The Master's special associates, the Apostles, were buffeted, and so all His followers have been. The Adversary does everything in His power to make their lives anything but peaceful and happy. This is true of all who walk in Jesus' footsteps. We have *fightings* without and fightings within, rather than *peace* without and peace within. We have fightings with our own flesh; and it is part of our victory that we "fight a good fight," a conquering fight. We are to put forth our best efforts in fighting against the world and the Adversary, against all the things that Satan would put into our minds and hearts, and we are to get the better of these things. The Lord blesses His people with strength to surmount these difficulties.

We are not to be at peace with the flesh, but always at warfare with it. Yet there is a peace in the Lord that is born of faith in Him and in His promises. He has promised us grace *sufficient;* He has promised that we shall not be overcome through having trials and difficulties that are too great for us. We are assured that we shall have the victory if we trust in His strength. This gives us a rest and peace in all our experiences.

"Through all the tumult and the strife!
I hear the music ringing!
It finds an echo in my soul;
How can I keep from singing?"

We are resting in the Lord's promises—we are resting in His strength and in His ability to make good His promises; for we know that He who has called us is able to fulfill all His good Word. This peace, or rest, is the special blessing of the Holy Spirit. Only in proportion as we receive the Holy Spirit, the holy mind of God, the holy disposition, can we have this peace fulfilled in us. It is a matter of simple ratio. As we grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord, in the knowledge of the Truth, we shall have this to comfort and strengthen us; and we shall thus have more of the peace of God every day, and be able to abide in His love.

It has been written for our instruction and comfort—"This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." This faith is built upon the testimony of God's Word—a sure foundation. It is only through strong and unwavering faith that the peace of God will abide with His children. God has made us His sons and heirs, joint-heirs with our Lord. "No good thing will He withhold" from these; "All things shall work together for their good"; "He shall bear them up in His hands, lest they dash their foot against a stone"; "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry." Then let us be strong!

PEACE FOUNDED UPON FAITH.

This peace of God is not dependent upon the smile of fortune, nor upon physical health, nor upon a host of friends. But it is a peace which abides even when health fails, or poverty comes in, or death steals from us the treasures of our hearts. It is a peace which none of the changes and vicissitudes of this life can take away from us, and which enemies are powerless to touch. What gift so rich could our Father give to His children!

How poor would be our inheritance today if we were without our anchorage in Christ! But with it we can endure all things which the Father's loving providence shall permit. Then let us face the coming days with calmness and courage. He who was with His dear disciples upon the stormy Sea of Galilee, and whose word of power quelled the mighty storm and stilled the raging of the sea, has the same care over His disciples today. When they cried out in fear, He quieted their hearts, saying, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" *NOTHING CAN IN ANY WISE HURT US IF OUR HEARTS ARE STAYED ON HIM.*

In order to enjoy this perfect peace we must have unswerving trust in our Father's love and abiding faithfulness. As we look out into the starry heavens we see a manifestation of God's mighty power and majesty, but our hearts and minds would not be stayed and sustained by this; we might receive gifts from Him, but without knowledge of His abiding faithfulness we would not know whether these might be only traps for our injury from the Adversary. But if we have this proper foundation for faith, if we learn to *know* our Father through His Word (the only way we can know Him), we come to have confidence in Him.

If we trusted to our own reasoning, we would be in a very unsatisfactory condition. All would be uncertain; we would have no sure basis for faith or assurance. But when we see that the testimony of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelations, reveals to us a God of Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power, our minds and hearts have something reasonable and convincing to lay hold upon, and we say: We can trust such a God, because He is trustworthy. This conviction deepens into joy as we step out upon His promises and prove them for ourselves, thus learning their reality and realizing their fulfillment. We rejoice that this loving God has called us to redemption through His Son. We rejoice that He has offered us eternal life, and has called us even to a glorious joint-heirship *with* this Son.—Romans 8:-17.

PEACE DEPENDENT UPON FULL OBEDIENCE.

We rejoice, further, to know of the wondrous provision for the whole world in the future. All these things form a firm basis for peace and joy and confidence in the Lord. But our peace is proportionate to our constancy—our staying qualities. No one can retain this peace of God whose mind is not "stayed," fixed, on God. It is not a peace of recklessness nor of sloth, but a peace begotten of God Himself, through His promises, which we have made our own. It is dependent also upon our full obedience to the Lord. It is the peace of Christ—"My peace." This peace and the faith which inspires it, can look up through its tears with joyful expectancy for the glorious fruition of our hopes, which God has promised and of which our present peace and joy are but the foretaste.

"Peace, perfect peace? our future all unknown?
Jesus we know, and He is on the Throne!

"Peace, perfect peace? death shadowing us and ours?
Jesus has vanquished death and all its powers!

"Peace, perfect peace? 'mid suffering's keenest throes?
The sympathy of Jesus brings repose.

"It is enough! Earth's struggles soon shall cease,
And Jesus call us to Heaven's perfect peace!"
—Z. '14, 102, 104.

The Lord looketh at the heart, and if he sees there FULL devotion to himself, he is pleased to grant to such his blessing, his aid, saying, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." "My grace is sufficient for thee—my strength is made perfect in weakness." We, too, are desirous of sharing the Kingdom with our Lord, yet not from love of exaltation above others, but from a desire to have this evidence that we please our Father and our Lord Jesus—to have this closeness of relationship to him, and to have the privilege of participation with our dear Redeemer in the great work of blessing all the families of the earth in due time.—Z. '04, 139.

We should strive to have strong will, strong character, and should put away everything that would be likely to weaken our character. *One who builds strong character REASONS OUT what he thinks is God's will*—what he thinks is the right thing to do. Then he determines to do that thing and resolves to let nothing interfere with the accomplishment of his purpose. Whoever has a good strong will has something to help him over every trial and difficulty in life.—Z. '13, 11.

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

We believe that these new, unscriptural theories and ideas are from the demons, who are gaining greater power to deceive at this time. We do not know that the false teachings of the past were recognized as false by those teaching them—their promoters were probably not aware that they were false teachers. And so it is today. . . . The evil spirits are responsible. . . . —Z. '15, 341.

It is for the Lord's children to remember that He has given us His Word, and that He reveals Himself through this Word. It is sufficient that He warns us against having anything to do with these occult powers. Examples of such warnings are found in the following Scriptures: Lev. 19:31; 20:6, 27; Deut. 18:10-12; 2 Kings 17:17, 23-24; 1 Chron. 10:13; 2 Chron. 33:6; Isa. 8:19; Jer. 27:9, 10; 29:8, 9; Luke 8:26-35; Acts 16:16-18.—Z. '15, 341.

There are, indeed, times and places where both the brethren and sisters must stand for *principles* and the liberty to worship God; but, these being granted, we may well sacrifice all other things as trivial; or, if we must contend, let us contend for *only such things as our Redeemer would have contended for.* Thus let us "walk in His steps, as He has set us an example."—1 Pet. 2:21. Z. '11, 390.

If you had some trees in your yard, and you should see one looking a little withered or sickly, you might dig around it, fertilize it, water it etc., but if upon examination, you found it dead down at the roots, you would say, no need to use more fertilizer for it. So with this matter of prayer and laboring with those who have lost the Spirit of Christ and have developed, instead, a vicious spirit of the Adversary; it is worse than a waste of time to have anything more to do with them.—Z. '10, 186.

To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Too great carefulness respecting every word and act and plan is not possible. Temptations may come along the line of our natural weaknesses, but may be even more effective against us along the lines of our greatest strength of character, because less carefully guarded.—Z. '08, 131, 132.

In considering this parable (the Ten Virgins), it is proper to notice, first of all, that it has not been applicable at all times and under all conditions. This is shown by the first word, "Then"—at that time—"the Kingdom of Heaven shall be likened unto ten virgins." Furthermore, it should be noted that the parable does not describe the world in general, but merely the "virgin" class—the Church class—the pure ones who have left the world, who have come to God through Christ, who have been justified by faith in His blood, and who have thus been made prospective members of the Kingdom class, the Bride class. This parable shows, then, *that in the end of this Age a separation, or division, will take place in the TRUE Church of Christ,* regardless of what may be the attitude of the world or of the nominal Church.—Z. '14:251, 252.

Another lesson is that however different the experiences of God's people, all who fall into line for the great promotion to the First Resurrection must expect to endure severe siftings, provings—of their love for the Lord, the Truth, the Brethren, and their loyalty to all these.

Let us never forget that siftings are permitted, not because the Lord has no interest in us, but because only those who can stand siftings, trials, and tests, are fit for places in the Kingdom.—Z. '14, 319.

O, how many forget the instructions of the Word, that we are to seek FIRST the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and to be content with such things as God's providence will grant us along these lines. How many are anxious to have something better in this world than God's providence has accorded them.—Z. '07, 205.

A little carelessness, a little looking away from the things which God hath in reservation for them that love Him, a little putting of our minds and affections on earthly things, earthly hopes, earthly ambitions, earthly prospects, would speedily mean great loss to us—a great backset as respects the race we are running for, the heavenly crown, the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus.—Z. '07, 4.

We beseech you, brethren, as you value the glorious hope set before you in the Gospel, that you give no heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, as the Apostle terms them (1 Tim. 4:1); but that, with fixedness of purpose, you apply yourselves to the *one thing* to which you are called and are privileged to do as prospective members of that Royal Priesthood.—Z. '16, 307.

The heart test may now be said to be the only one, because our flesh, justified, then consecrated to death, is not the New Creature which hopes for glory, honor and immortality, but merely its imperfect servant or tool. The New Creature's heart or affections must be loyal to the very highest principles of Justice and Love, and, according to its development along these lines, will be the Divine decision for life or for death—on some plane or on no plane of being.

The Great Company must have the Christ-like character, as well as the Little Flock and as well as the Restitution class at the end of the Millennium. We are not to understand that there will be, for any of the consecrated, any further trial or education or development or testing after the present trial is ended. *No one will be in either the Little Flock or the Great Company except those who are in loving loyalty to God, to the brethren, to the principles of righteousness.* All others will be condemned as unfit for life eternal upon any plane of being.—Z. '09, 72.

Let us, dear friends, realize more and more that we cannot turn aside the divine plan by our puny oppositions if we were so disposed, and let us get into such heart harmony with the Lord, let us exercise such faith toward him, that nothing will be farther from our thoughts than to substitute a plan of our own for his, or in any wise to alter, change, or amend the gracious plan which, rightly seen, includes all the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of love and wisdom divine. Let us not fight against God, and be overwhelmed and suffer loss of position if not loss of life eternal. Let us on the contrary receive the great blessing which comes to all those who are children of the light, who receive it into good and honest hearts, and who rejoice in it.—Z. '05, 251.

INTERESTING LETTERS

AN OPEN LETTER.

To the Sealed Saints of God, Scattered Abroad:

Greetings in the name of our glorious Lord and blessed Redeemer. Grace and peace be multiplied unto you.

Long ago some one "discovered" that "To err is human, to forgive is Divine." I dare say we would all declare that *man* is as prone to err as the sparks are to fly upwards, but some may combat the thought that they themselves are to be included in the general rule. The sooner we all recognize and acknowledge that the infirmities incident to the fall are more or less common to us, the easier it will be for us to "judge ourselves" properly. There is none that doeth good, no, not one. We try, but we fail ignominiously.

The sealed saint deplores his faults, decries his imperfections, but that does not remove them. So we must expect to continue erring to the end of our earthly course, hence we daily cry, "Father, forgive us our trespasses." To *will* is present, but how to *do* is the question. We cannot *do* a single thing *right,* though we *will* to do perfectly; hence, the constant conflict between the imperfect flesh and the New Mind. These are never in harmony. Listen to the great Apostle: "What I *desire to do* is not *what I do,* but what I am *averse* to is what I *do.*"—Rom. 7:15 (Weymouth).

We recall in this connection the remarkable statement made by Brother James: "If any man offend not in *word,* the same is a *perfect* man." Note Brother Russell's comments: "Even the most advanced of the Lord's people are liable to err at times with their lips." But can we justly be so generous in our estimate of *evil surmising,* which is the besetment of all to a greater or lesser extent? We think not. It is an evil which must be combatted with all the powers of our beings. It must not be dealt with gently. Perhaps fifty per cent of the troubles in the Church might be traced to this mark of the fall, and the other fifty per cent to *acting* first and *thinking* afterwards.

Imperfect? Rather. So, then, if we must "surmise," let us be careful to "surmise" *Good.* But the hearts of the sealed saints are Perfect, their motives of necessity must be pure, however blundering their expressions, which serve to teach us more and more the necessity of humility.

In this connection, then, I would call attention to a notice in a recent issue of the Old Corn Gems relative to myself, which gave the impression that I was no longer a Stand Fast Bible Student. This, I am glad to say, was a fault of the pen and not of the heart. Though an injustice was done me, which caused me sorrow, heartaches, agony, I am fully persuaded that it was not the intention of the Committee to cast any such aspersions upon me, and I can also see how from their standpoint it was possible for them to infer that it was not my purpose to any longer cooperate with them in their activities. Perhaps I was in some measure responsible for their wrong impression, because of my imperfect way of doing some things and blundering manner of saying others. Never for one moment did I question their motives, and I am also sure the Committee do not question mine. Indeed, full confidence exists between us.

Anyway, every item and atom of difference, all of which were based upon mutual misunderstandings, have been fully and satisfactorily adjusted. So we are "Standing Fast," and *together,* in the fullest sense, with sweetest harmony prevailing. What more need be said?—Psa. 133:1.

Yours for the Kingdom,

(Signed) W. M. WISDOM.

Portland, Oregon, June 26, 1919. Box 939.

Dear Brethren:

May the love, peace and joy of our Dear Lord and Master be with you. We are indeed glad to again be able to address you in His precious name, and to thank you for your efforts on our behalf. Certainly we have just finished one of the most wonderful spiritual feasts we ever have had the pleasure of attending. He was certainly with us in our little convention, and did richly bless us all. Oh, the wondrous love and comfort these dear Comforters brought us, and how they made some of these most precious truths shine, some that we had lost sight of, and some that we had never seen before. We here also wish to thank all of you dear Brethren for your labors of love in preparing those wonderful Gems for us, which surely are a strength and comfort to us now, and is it not wonderful how these things now are bringing to the light the hidden truths in Volume 7 and how that volume, as well as the others, are judging some who have not kept their covenant of sacrifice, who have left their first love?

Remember us, dear ones, at the throne of grace that we all may soon meet Him face to face and be able to perfectly show forth His wondrous love, and praise Him forever more.

Yours in the sweet bonds of His love and grace,

BOTHER AND SISTER F. W. S.—Iowa.

Dear Brother:

I am writing to tell you of the blessings that have been coming to us lately. First we received the Old Corn Gems you so kindly sent us. We appreciate them and thank you for them. Then I must tell you we have had our wonderfully good convention. But how can I tell you, for words fail to express the blessing and joy and strength received there. How can anything keep us from rejoicing always, though we must fight to the end the good fight of faith. The four Comforters and Brother Sessoms, who was an elder of our class when he lived here, how glad we were to see them! How much we love them all! Oh, what it is to be a sealed saint and have fellowship with the other dear sealed ones! It is just grandly good.

There are six of us here. Two others seem like they may belong on this side, but do not fully see yet. We are going to have our studies and prayer meeting as we did in the big class. Four of us intend to go to the convention at Chicago the last of June. Hope we may see you there and many of the dear Stand Fasts. I did not wish to hinder your work with a long letter, but I could not keep from writing just all I have written.

You know from what I have written that I am very thankful—first to the Lord for our good convention and also to you for the part you have had in helping. I am rejoicing so much I can hardly stop writing.

I will close with much Christian love,

Your Sister,

I. K.—Texas.

Dear Brethren in Christ:

Greetings and Christian Love:

Perhaps you will think we are a little late in expressing to you our gratefulness and appreciation for sendng us Brothers ——— and ——— the last of May. We did enjoy association with them both so much. Brother ——— gave us a very beautiful and logical discourse on Volume A chart, showing that the separation was due and that it was in our heavenly Father's arrangement and plan. Brother ——— also gave us a very good study on the parable of the "Penny." We also enjoyed the fellowship.

But the most prominent thing in their visit to us was God's supervising care. We are a five-day journey from the Coast, where most of the "Stand Fast" friends are; we are one hundred and seventy miles from any other class, so far as we know, and we have the same thoughts in mind. The subjects uppermost in our studies and meditation seemed also just the subjects the "Comforters" had been talking of and thinking of. When the "Gems" come they just drop into place; all seems so harmoniously arranged and provided. Zion! Surely God is in the widst of her! Surely He Himself is come forth to serve us, else there would be different lines of thought in so widely different localities. But most beautiful is the rest, faith, joy, peace, confidence and love that seems to be the ruling element in each of their lives.

We wish to be remembered with another visit when any of the friends or Comforters are passing this way.

With earnest prayers and Christian love, I am,

Your Sister in Christ,

MRS. D. J.—Mo.

As respects Spiritual Israel, their interests are spiritual; and the Divine promises do not guarantee them earthly blessings and protection, but rather the reverse—persecution and opposition. God's guarantee to Spiritual Israel, however, is that all the adversities of the present life which He permits to come to them will work out to their eternal spiritual welfare, if they are rightly exercised thereby.—Z. '15:43.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER THIRTEEN

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"LEST YE ENTER INTO TEMPTATION"

What may be the character of the temptations, we may not clearly discern until they are upon us; for if we knew all about them in advance they would be but slight temptations. Watch, therefore, and pray always; for the only safe way is to be prepared; because your adversary, the devil, is seeking whom he may devour. He knows your weak points, and is ready to take advantage of them. We will each need the graces of the spirit in our hearts, as well as the Lord's "grace to help in time of need" if we would overcome. "Watch ye, and pray, lest ye enter into temptation!"

"My soul, be on thy guard,
Ten thousand foes arise;
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the prize."

"Whosoever will live godly shall suffer persecution."

"They have called the Master of the house Beelzebub. . . . The servant is not above his Lord."

Our Lord said to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all over me except it were given thee from above." The same is true of every member of his body.

"A man's foes shall be they of his own household."

"They shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake . . . Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven."

"The god of this world . . . now worketh in the children of disobedience." . . . "We are not ignorant of his devices."—Z. '03, 119.

NOTICE OF CONVENTIONS.

There will be a Convention at Bellingham, Wash., July 18th, 19th, 20th, at which there will be a corps of able speakers present. We can assure all who attend a profitible time. For particulars address L. K. Pattison, 1225 High Street, Bellingham, Wash.

Convention at Seattle, Wash., July 25th, 26th, 27th, W. O. W. Hall, Fourth and Marion Streets. A number of our pilgrim Comforters will also be present at this Convention, and we look forward to an inspiring season of sweet fellowship together. For particulars address F. E. French, 4227 Aurora Avenue, Seattle, Wash.

O, what a thought! In all our weaknesses and imperfections we are BY THE LORD'S GRACE enabled to come off conquerors and more than conquerors through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.—Z. '05, 207.

"It is the crushed olive that yields the oil, the pressed grape that gives forth the wine; and it was the smitten rock that gave the people water. So it is the broken, contrite heart that is most rich in holiness and most fragrant in grace.—Z. '95, 48.

There is a most potent lesson here for those weak and ignoble characters which think to shirk responsibility by indifference and passive acquiescence with popular errors. Both the active and the passive of the nation of Israel suffered alike the penalty of their national crime.—Z. '95, 179.

The Church, the Temple of God, will be so filled with all the fullness of God, when made like her glorious Lord (1 John 3:2), that nothing could add to her blessings of knowledge and Divine favor. She will be so filled with the glory of God that from her, as from her Lord and Head, shall proceed the light of the glory of God, which shall heal and bless the world during the Millennial Age.—Z. '16, 393.

Those who are in close relationship to the Lord have His assurance that all their steps are ordered of Him, and that all things shall work together for good to them that love God and that have been called according to His Purpose. (Psalm 37:23; Romans 8:28.) What a consolation these assurances are to all of the Lord's people! It is no wonder that such may have quiet, rest and peace, even in times of storm and trouble.—Z. '16, 250.

The victory of the Lord is attained by the Antitypical Gideon and His little band of faithful followers, "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord." The Lord's Spirit is represented by the light of the lamp shining from the broken vessel. The broken vessels of Gideon's host represent how the Lord's people present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, in His service—in letting the light shine out—in fighting a good fight against the hosts of sin.—Z. '15, 11.

One of the greatest wonders, one of the greatest miracles, one that is more convincing to us than any other could be, is the change which the divine message has wrought in our own hearts—transforming us through the power of the holy Spirit. Not only do we see this transforming power at work in others, changing them from glory to glory and preparing them for the final glorious change of the First Resurrection, but additionally we experience it in our own hearts and appreciate the fact that the things that we once hated now we love, and the things we once loved now we hate. The poet gave the right thought here when he exclaimed, "I am a miracle of grace."—Z. '05, 29.

If we faithfully endure to the end, the reward will be ours. If we prove our loyalty and *keep our faith that God is supervising our affairs,* and that no good thing will be withheld from those who are walking uprightly, we shall some day hear his "Well done, good and faithful servant."—Z. '11, 122.

Published by the Stand Fast Bible Students' under the supervision of members of a committee of seven. F. McKercher, Chairman, Box 939, Portland, Oregon.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER THIRTEEN

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Cannan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL. Z. '18:51.

JUDGMENT—ITS USE AND ABUSE

"Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."—Matt. 7:1-2.

A very unlovely disposition in the eyes of God, and of all fair-minded men, is that which assumes the obligation of sitting in uncharitable judgment upon all the affairs and conduct of fellow-men, either within the Church or outside of it.

That our Lord referred to this abuse of judgment, and not to the legitimate use of that noble faculty, is very manifest from succeeding verses (3-5), which warn against the hypocrisy of condemning others for faults no greater than those which exist in one's self, but to which self-love is wilfully blind; and also from verses 15-20, which bid us beware of wolves in sheep's clothing, or, in other words, to use sound judgment in discriminating between the truly consecrated and faithful children of God, whose hearts are pure and free from guile, and those who studiously cover up a wolf-like character with the outward profession of godliness, in order to deceive and lead astray the unwary.

"By their fruits ye shall know them," said the Lord; and to use candid and unbiased judgment in comparing their fruits—of character, conduct or teaching—with their professions and with the Word of God, is necessary to the safety and protection of the Lord's people. This, therefore, is a very legitimate use of judgment; and those who, disregarding the Lord's warning, either recklessly or wilfully, fail so to exercise judgment, expose themselves to the deceitful snares of the great adversary. The wolf is not to be tolerated, nor his sheep's clothing respected: he has no rightful place in the assemblies of the true sheep until his character is changed by repentance and submission to the will of God. His presence can only bring reproach upon all associated with him, and sow the seeds of error and discord; and, learning the shibboleth of the saints, he will deceitfully make merchandise of their holy things *and demand that Christian charity should let him alone in his nefarious work.*

Alas! many simple ones, ignoring the Lord's counsel, weakly yield to this demand, to their great detriment spiritually. They give that which is holy unto the dogs and cast their pearls before the swine; and the wolf is often tolerated out of respect for his sheep's clothing. It is not real charity to such characters to permit them to pursue their course unmolested; nor is it true loyalty to the cause of Christ. To firmly and candidly let such persons know that we recognize their character and refuse to fellowship or company with them until a change of heart is manifested, and to positively and openly resist their influence, is the noblest and truest charity, both to them and to the cause of Christ in general, though such a course will assuredly bring persecution in some shape.

To deal thus candidly and fairly may in some cases wake up the erring to a sense of their wickedness, and, by making it unprofitable to them, may lessen the temptations to continue the evil course. At all events, it gives the sheep and lambs of the Lord's flock warning of the dangers to be expected from such sources. To encourage or assist such, is to become partakers of their evil deeds. (2 John 11.) Nor would Christian charity demand that the wicked or the profligate should be protected against the natural rewards of their evil course. To thus aid them is only to interfere with the divine arrangement by which sin brings its own retribution for the correction of the sinner. Thus, for instance, if when a profligate son spends his substance in riotous living, an unwise father makes up his loss and starts him anew, not allowing him to realize the evil effects of his course, the son misses the lesson and proceeds to greater lengths in an evil course. The love of God is not thus unwise: if it were, he would not permit the great time of trouble, now impending, to come upon the world. But he will permit it, and when the judgments of the Lord are thus abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. (Isa. 26:9.) It is not our part, however, to bring evil upon the evil-doers; for vengeance belongs to God. Nor would it be contrary to the spirit of the Lord to show pity and to alleviate the dire wants of those in distress from their own folly. This would not interfere with the needed lesson, but, on the contrary, would tend to soften the heart and make it more susceptible to the lesson.

While the legitimate use of judgment for wise and holy ends is plainly taught in this sermon of our Lord, the first verse of this chapter expressly commands that we should not reckon ourselves as the competent judges of men's hearts, to uncharitably condemn them on our own responsibility. But when their course of conduct is in manifest opposition to and defiance of God's law, as in cases of disguised "wolves," "swine" and "dogs," the condemnation of that law, which is *God's judgment,* not ours merely, should always be recognized.

As a matter of fact, if we have the spirit of the Lord, our judgment will coincide with his—approving what he approves, and condemning what he condemns: we will judge righteous judgment, which makes every possible allowance for the infirmities of the flesh, the strength of temptation and the imperfections of knowledge, and which, ever bearing in mind that we also are far short of perfection, never forgets the golden rule—"Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets."—Verse 12;Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:40; Rom. 13:8, 9, 10; Gal. 5:14; 1 Tim. 1:5.

Verse 2 makes very imperative the application of this golden rule in such cases—"For with what judgment pe judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." Oh, if men and women would always consider these things, how much uncharitable judgment and evil-speaking, and how many bitter words, would be spared! If each could recognize in the other the spirit of love and candor, how quickly wrongs could be righted! If reproofs were always expressed in the spirit of the golden rule, how much more effective they would be than when they are colored with the glare of hatred and revenge!

"How wise are God's commands!
How sure his precepts are!"

Let us ponder them well, and cultivate more and more in our own hearts the spirit of God's love and kindness—the spirit of his holy law.—Z. '94, 311-313.

THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION

IS IT IN VAIN THAT THE LORD INSTRUCTED HIS PEOPLE THAT THE CLOSING TIME OF THIS GOSPEL AGE WOULD BE AN "HOUR OF TEMPTATION" COMING UPON THE WHOLE WORLD? (Revelation 3:10.) Surely we have not been taught of the Lord in vain! and so, all loyal to Him are buckling on the breastplate, the helmet and the sandals, and are taking the sword and the shield. If we have not yet entered into fierce conflicts, we know that we are to expect them; and we should be prepared, and have such practice and experience as would enable us to acquit ourselves valiantly in "the hour of temptation."

Since we are instructed that this "hour of temptation" cometh upon the whole world, as well as upon the Church, we perceive that it must be something in the air, as it were, that would affect everybody. We believe that this temptation is a thing spreading itself gradually in every direction; and the Master assured us that unless these days would be cut short by the establishment of His Kingdom in the hands of the Elect, no flesh would survive.

We understand this to mean that the spirit of selfishness and ambition, which is already operating among the nations, and . . . is seen in the strikes, etc., of our own land—everybody anxious to serve self, and willing to fight for honors, privileges, positions, etc.

But we are more interested in the Church and in seeing how this "Hour of temptation" will involve the Lord's people. What we are about to write is far from what we would prefer, but it seems to be our duty as respects the Lord's Cause and people. We believe that a *great crisis* is upon the Bible students; and that the sooner it is discerned, the more successfully it may be passed. *It may mean divisions;* but as the Apostle remarked, divisions are sometimes necessary, that the approved course and the approved doctrines and the approved methods may be discerned, and that the true teachers be the more fully appreciated.—1 Corinthians 11:18, 19. . . .

"TAKE HEED TO YOURSELVES."

It couses real grief to write that much of the *difficulty* and *danger* to the Church seems to lie at the *door* of the Elders and Deacons—not all, thank God, but apparently a small minority of them, judging from the queries which come to the Office from time to time from the bewildered sheep, who seek advice as to their proper course. *The true, loyal servants in the Church should be all the more appreciated by the Lord's people in proportion as they realize the difference between true Elders and Deacons and those who are untrue.* Nor are we writing with a view to the discouragement of the unfaithful, but rather to open their eyes to the true situation, that perchance they may be recovered out of the snare of the Adversary and become *helpers* of the Lord's Flock, instead of *hinderers.*

So far as we are able to judge, the same conditions prevail today amongst Bible students which the Apostle pointed out to the Elders of the Church of Ephesus when he charged them: "Take, therefore, heed unto yourselves and all the Flock, over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God which He hath purchased with the blood of His own (Son)." (Acts 20:28.) St. Paul's prophecy came true: "After my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the Flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, Brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace."—Acts 20:29-32.

COURSE OF TWO OF GOD'S SERVANTS CONTRASTED.

As it was AMBITION which first misled Lucifer, and converted a glorious servant of God into an adversary, so it is *his spirit* that has been dangerous all the way down. The spirit of our Master was the very reverse of this. "He humbled Himself, even unto death," in the doing of the will of the Father. We see nothing of the spirit of pride or ambition or self-seeking of any sort in our Master. We are warned by the Apostle to humble ourselves after His example, if we desire to be exalted with Him in His Kingdom.

But how many seem to forget entirely these Scriptures, which we so frequently bring to the attention of the Lord's people as essential to our attaining to any position in the Kingdom! . . .

. . . It may generally be expected that such as manifest an ambition of this kind to be leaders and teachers and to ignore the principles of the Golden Rule, as well as the special instructions for the New Creation, are generally the *ones* who bring in FALSE DOCTRINES. The same ambitious spirit of the Adversary which leads them to strive for honor in the Class seems to lead them on to pose as *great teachers*—bringers forth of NEW LIGHT. This also, the Apostle explains, is a characteristic of Satan. He says, "What wonder if he transforms himself into an angel of light"—makes himself to appear a leader amongst the children of light. (2 Cor. 11:14.) In many cases, the Classes are solely to blame, according to their own statement. . . .

The selection of improper leaders is evidently a sin, and quite a reflection against the Classes who have the improper leaders. How could such get into position to represent the Lord's people, except by the latter's votes? . . .

"DECEIVING AND BEING DECEIVED."

We have already alluded to the ambitious and selfish spirit in the world leading on to anarchy; and we have just pointed out how the same selfish, ambitious spirit is leading on to anarchy in the Church. We foresee a Time of Trouble for the world upon this score, and a Time of Trouble *also for the Church.* The world cannot purge itself of this class; for the leaders and the led have the worldly spirit, which is sure to wax worse and worse. But not so in the Church of Christ. Ours is the spirit of the Master, the spirit of loyalty to Truth, the spirit of the Golden Rule, the spirit of brotherly love, the spirit of liberty and helpfulness, the spirit of fidelity to what we believe to be the Truth. It is inexcusable for the Church, possessed of this spirit, to continue under the domination of ambitious men (and sometimes ambitious women.) If they have not been conducting their Class affairs along proper lines, should they not begin at once? We believe that this is the time in which to set the House of the Lord in order.

But someone will say, "We would have a great disturbance if we attempted to do anything contrary to the wishes of those who have fastened themselves upon us as our Leaders and rulers. To make a move at all, would endanger a division of the Class, and how could we think of anything which would result in that catastrophe?"

But, we inquire, which would be the better, to have a smaller Class operating along the lines which the Lord has indicated, or a larger Class upholding principles contrary to the Lord's provision, injuring themselves, hindering their influence, and encouraging as a leader one who is either a "wolf" or else a "sheep" which has been mistakenly misled into the wolf spirit? We encourage all the dear Brethren who are in such trouble to be very heroic; to see that they do nothing from strife or vain-glory, but everything in the spirit of meekness and love, that they may get back again to the liberty wherewith Christ made free, and be not again entangled in any human bondage.

REMEMBER DOCTRINAL TESTS ALSO.

Repeatedly Bible Students write us that their Elders try to hinder them from the use of the WATCH TOWER SOCIETY'S Publications as text-books in Bible Study. Some of these Elders go so far as to tell the classes that they are out of harmony with *many of the things in these textbooks.* Sometimes, as rulers, they forbid the use of these in the classes. We are asked what should be done under such circumstances.

We reply, Let those who wish to follow such leaders do so that is their right. We shall wish them well. BUT LET US NOT FOLLOW WITH THEM NOR SUBMIT FOR A MOMENT TO SUCH ARRANGEMENTS. It is the height of impertinence for such a leader to intrude himself in such a manner, and attempt to tell the Church what they shall and what they shall not do. As the power of *election* is in the hands of the *Church,* so the power of *dismission* is in their hands. We recommend that such Classes vote to *dismiss* such an Elder from his *position* of service, telling him kindly that his services are no longer desired. Perhaps with a back seat for a while, and an opportunity for thinking over the matter, he may be benefited himself, and the Class also be greatly helped forward by taking such a stand—no matter whether there be no other person in the Class . . . accustomed to leading Classes. Far better would it be to appoint any one of your number to act as chairman, or to take turns in the matter of opening and closing meetings—anything to preserve your liberty and to continue the work of worship and study along proper lines.

Let us make a discrimination between the positive teachings of the Bible—the doctrines of Christ—and the slightly variant ways of *expressing* those doctrines. We are not to expect any two persons to use exactly the same words; but there are certain doctrines which are *fast and immovable* from the viewpoint of the majority of Bible Students. *Any one not in good harmony with those presentations should not be encouraged in the slightest degree, but, on the contrary, should be discouraged.* If he has different views, do not persecute him—do not follow the style of the Dark Ages, but follow the proper course of letting him "flock to himself," or with as many as prefer to view matters as he views them.

We have not given such strong advice heretofore; but we perceive that many of the dear sheep are being troubled, hindered of development, and imposed upon. We see that proportionately such Elders and Deacons are growing more bold, and hence the need is the greater that all who do have the right spirit, and who realize that under the Lord's guidance in our study of the Divine Plan of the Ages, we have not been following "cunningly devised fables," should now take a positive stand for the good of themselves, for the good of the leaders who manifest a wrong spirit. . . .

While we are encouraging positiveness and courage, we are not wishing to encourage a spirit of strife, or of nagging and fault-finding amongst the faithful servants of the Lord who do manifest the humble spirit and who do accord the Class its rights and liberties and who seek to "serve well." Again we repeat, "Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory, but all to the glory of God," and with the sole object in view of purging the Church of the influence of those who never should have been chosen, or having been chosen in proper condition, have since manifested a perverted and ambitious spirit. Again we counsel for these *positiveness,* but *kindness* and, *if they repent,* mercy—with a view possibly to restoring them to confidence later on. The Apostle wrote, "I hear that there are divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must also be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." (1 Corinthians 11:18, 19.) HERE THE DIVISION EVIDENTLY MUST COME; AND EVIDENTLY THE SOONER IT COMES, THE BETTER IT WILL BE FOR THE TRUTH AND FOR ALL WHO LOVE IT.

"BY MY SPIRIT, SAITH THE LORD."

We should never forget the Apostle's instruction, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2:14.) Additionally, experience demonstrates to us that even after we have been begotten of the Holy Spirit, our ability to understand spiritual things depends, not only upon our study of the Scriptures, which are able to make us wise, but also upon the measure of the Holy Spirit which we possess. Hence the Apostle's exhortation, "Be ye filled with the Spirit!" —Ephesians 5:18.

This means that only the spirit-begotten may understand the deep things of God at all; and that their understanding would be in proportion as they attain more and more a filling, a saturation with the spirit of holiness, the spirit of God, the spirit of Christ, the spirit of Truth. Every Bible Student should realize that if, as a New Creature, he walks after the flesh and not after the Spirit, his mind will become more or less darkened, and not only will his ability to understand the deep things of God decrease, but even his recollection of the Lord's Word will decrease; and that, on the contrary, when he is living near to the Lord—walking after the Spirit and not after the flesh—his memory of the Divine Word and his ability to appreciate its Spirit are increased.

Additionally, let us remember that a correct understanding of the Lord's Word is not enjoyed by all the educated and talented, but comes to those who are of a meek and teachable heart, who study the Lord's Word *and who live it and absorb its spirit*. Thus we have illustrated to us the Divine declaration, "Not by might (greatness), nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."—Zechariah 4:6.

The lesson to us is that no matter how great, no matter how able any brother or sister may be, this will not make such fit to be a leader of the Lord's people unless he have additionally the all-important items—first, a knowledge of the Lord's Word; and second, the possession of a good degree of the spirit of Truth—one who always dare be trusted as an ambassador of the Lord. None others should be recognized as teachers or leaders amongst the Lord's people. It is the thought of Churchianity that only the great, the learned, the talented, should be the ministers of the Lord's Word; but the Bible's presentation is to the contrary of this. "The spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Good Tidings to the meek."—Isaiah 61:1.

It is in view of these things that we feel justified in urging upon the Classes of Bible Students everywhere that they esteem with double honor such Elder brethren as manifest the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of meekness, the spirit of gentleness, the spirit of patience, the spirit of long-suffering, the spirit of brotherly-kindness, and the spirit of love—those who have a good knowledge of the Word of God and of the Divine Plan, and who manifest an appreciation of the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of holiness, and who have an aptness to teach; and that on the contrary, ALL OTHERS BE REFUSED.—Z. '16, 327-330.

While we are waiting for the deliverance, the daily experiences of life have a most important mission to me, and the manner in which we receive and use them should be a matter of deepest concern to us; for, according to the use we make of them, each day's prosperity or adversity and trial bears to us a blessing or a curse.—Z. '95, 20.

NOT HOLDING THE HEAD

Colossians 2:18.

The Apostle warns us all against a wrong attitude which at all times has more or less threatened the body of Christ, in its larger gatherings as well as in its little handfuls;—he warns us against the danger of looking too much to ourselves or to other men in the Church and not enough toward the Lord, who is indeed "the Head of the Church, which is his body." Some members he represents as taking a *head position*, forgetful of the fact that "one is the Head of the Church, even Christ," and inclined in consequence of this forgetfulness to think too highly of themselves, to imagine that the whole weight and importance of the Lord's cause devolves upon them, and to *assume too much leadership*.

The Apostle warns other less prominent members of the Church against a *recognition and support* of such a wrong position, assuring them that their condescension is extreme, prejudicial to themselves and to the interests they would serve; that the angels, that is the messengers, the representatives of the Church (Rev. 1:20; 2:1) are not to be worshipped, though they are to be highly esteemed *in proportion to their faithfulness,* good works and humility. He warns other members that such a humiliation as would ignore themselves entirely and cast all the weight and responsibility and influence upon these angels or elders would be improper, would indicate an unfaithfulness to Christ and a failure to rightly appreciate his arrangements.

DANGERS IN OPPOSITE EXTREMES.

Thus, reproving two classes because of taking opposite extremes, the Apostle proceeds to explain that the difficulty with both parties is a failure to hold the Head in proper esteem—*CHRIST, the only true Head of the Church.* Whether by exalting ourselves, usurping our Lord's place in the Church, and ignoring his words and arrangements and being puffed up as his servants, or whether on the other hand quietly submitting to such things and doing reverence to those who usurp the Lord's place in his body, in either case the difficulty is the same —a failure to rightly recognize the true Head.

If we accept the fact that Christ is the Head of the Church, let us rest every argument on that basis; let us not feel for a moment that everything will go to pieces unless we steady the ark—that we are main spokes in the divine program in any little quarter of Zion. (1 Chron. 13:10.) All such self-conceited ideas are traitorous as respects the Captain of our Salvation, for he has told us —and we believe his word—"Without me ye can do nothing." Every member of the body of Christ, whom the Lord has in any sense of the word set in the Church to serve his cause, should realize that he is not at all essential to the development of the divine plan, that it is favor pure and simple that he has been granted a share in connection with it, that his blessings day by day more than compensate any little service and sacrifice he may be able to render. *So far from feeling heady he should feel humbled by the thought that he is permitted to have any part in the great plan of God as a servant amongst his brethren, and he should realize distinctly that, so surely as the Lord is the Head of his Church, any who cease to occupy positions of trust in a humble manner will be debased, will lose the privileges and opportunities, perhaps with injury to themselves and to others.*

Those humble brothers and sisters who quietly permit a brother to exalt himself amongst them and to speak of the gathering, large or small, as "my Church," "my followers," etc., are not only doing the brother an injury and encouraging him in a wrong course, but they are DISLOYAL TO THE REAL HEAD OF THE CUURCH. *He who submits to such conditions and language demonstrates that he does not properly appreciate* "the liberty wherewith Christ makes free"—demonstrates either that he is but a "babe in Christ" or that he has *gone to sleep* as respects a proper watchfulness for the honor of the Church and of the Head of the Church. It matters not that such things can be explained away as not having *meant anything serious.* The fact is that *such language and claims indicate that* SOMETHING SERIOUS HAS ALREADY TAKEN PLACE. for no truly humble Elder of the Church of Christ, loyal to the Head, would think of speaking of himself as instead of the Head of the Church, nor think of speaking of the Lord's people as his Church.

Such public offenses should be publicly apologized for, otherwise such leaders should be relegated to the back seats. No matter if they had all the oratory imaginable, *no matter if none of the others* had any talent for service. The poorest and weakest and most insignificant member of the body is, in the Lord's estimation, better qualified to teach than is one who vaunteth and puffeth up himself and affects to take in the Church the position of the Head. Mark the Apostle's words, "Vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind and not holding fast the Head, from whom all the body being supplied and knit together through the joints and bands, increaseth with the increase of God."—Col. 2:19.

SELF FIRST, GOD SECOND.

In 2 Timothy 2:3 the Apostle assures us that, "In the last days grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents (and higher authority in general), unthankful, unholy . . . traducers, heady, highminded . . . having a form of godliness, but ignoring the power thereof."

This picture certainly fits well to our day throughout nominal Christendom, and it is not strange therefore that something of the same general spirit at times seeks to invade the camp of the saints—the little companies of the consecrated who are striving to be overcomers of the world and its spirit. The fact that the Apostle writes thus forcefully on this question does not prove any lack of sympathy on his part, and assuredly our reference to his words indicate no lack of sympathy on our part. But the trouble is a grievous one and especially injurious to the brethren who may yield to such headiness; nothing is surer to sap spiritual vitality and to lead us into darkness, both doctrinal and spiritual.

On the contrary the Apostle James warns us against this danger which besets the more talented of the Lord's people. He writes, Be not many of you teachers, brethren, knowing that a man shall receive the stronger testings. (Jas. 3:1.) It is because of our love for the brethren, because of our high esteem for them, and because we appreciate their services and desire that they may be continued in the service of the Lord, not only now but also in the everlasting future, that we feel it necessary to press this point, not personally, not individually, but generally.

We urge upon all whom the Lord hath set in the body, either in a humble position or in a conspicuous place, that the Apostle's words be remembered—that as our Lord humbled himself and was subsequently exalted, it demonstrates a principle at work in the Father's program under which all of his Royal Priesthood must humble themselves if they would in due time be exalted; also the Apostle's concluding argument is, "Humble yourselves, therefore, brethren, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." *Now is* NOT *the proper time for exaltation;* to elevate ourselves or others under present conditions is to incur the greater danger of a fall. Hence all who are earnest and of humble heart should both watch and pray lest they enter into temptation along this line, which from the very beginning of the Gospel age has been the *most serious stumbling block* in the pathway of this class. We remember that it was amongst the apostles themselves that the argument took place as to which would be greatest in the Kingdom. Let us also remember our Lord's words of reproof to them, "Except ye humble yourselves and become as little children ye can in no wise enter into the Kingdom."

ONLY THE HUMBLE ARE SAFE.

Thus our Lord marks *humility* as one of the prime essentials of a place in the Kingdom. And we can see the importance, the reason for this. To exalt to the glory, honor and immortality of the Kingdom and divine nature one who had not thoroughly demonstrated his humility of spirit would be to place him in a position where he might become another Satan, another adversary, who in time under one delusion or another might wish to divide the divine honors even beyond the munificence of our heavenly Father's provision for all those who are truly his consecrated ones.

It will not be very long, dear brethren—let us have patience. Let us have faith, too, not be doubters. Much of the endeavor to grasp and wield authority in the Church is at first undertaken with the best of intentions, with the desire to do and be in the highest interests of the Church. *In such cases faith is not strong enough to realize how unnecessary we are to the divine plan and how able the Lord is to overrule every incident and circumstance according to the divine will!* More faith in the Lord's power to regulate the affairs of the Church will counteract largely the efforts of some of his people to run the Church's interests along lines of their own wisdom and ability. Let us remember that he is able, he is willing, to work all things according to the counsel of his own will. LET US REMEMBER THAT OUR HIGHEST PLACE IS LYING LOW, THAT THE GREATEST MASTERY IS SELF-MASTERY, and that whatever success we might have in usurping the place and authority of our Lord and His Word would undoubtedly react unfavorably to us in the end. Hence in self-preservation as well as in the interest of the Church and in honor of the Lord, we need to keep self under. Let us remember the words of the poet and apply them daily:

"O! to be nothing, nothing,
  Painful the humbling may be;
Yet low in the dust I'd lay me
  That the world my Savior might see.
Rather be nothing, nothing—
  To him let their voices be raised;
He is the fountain of blessing,
  Yes, worthy is he to be praised."

Let us keep ever in memory the Apostle's example and words: "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus our Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.—2 Cor. 4:5. Z. '05, 248, 249.

What a wonderful thought this is, that our Master has toward us the same kind of love that the Father has toward him! (Our Redeemer!) Could our faith always grasp this thought and maintain this hold, we should indeed have nothing to wish or to fear. . . . The next thought suggested is that having reached, having attained this high position in the Lord's favor, if we are his disciples and truly appreciate what he has done for us in this respect, we will desire to continue in his love. Next in order come the terms and conditions upon which we may continue in that love, namely, that we KEEP his commandments.—Z. '05, 124.

REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE

It was in connection with our Master's prophetic warnings respecting the trials of the present day that he used the words, "Remember Lot's Wife" (Luke 17:32); and their significance should be comprehended by all who are walking in the light.

The lesson is that those who, under the special guidance of the Lord, are now fleeing for life to the mountain of the Lord's Kingdom, will be held to a much stricter account than others. Lot and his family were not accused of sharing the evil practices of the Sodomites; his wife's outward fault was merely that of looking back; but we may reasonably suppose that this implied a heart out of harmony with her deliverance and in some degree sympathetic with the evil things and evil people which God had condemned as unworthy of life. She at heart clung to the accursed things, even though she did not outwardly return to them, but fled from them; and therefore God brought her no further. SHE BECAME A MONUMENT OF THE FOLLY OF SYMPATHIZING WITH EVIL-DOERS AFTER KNOWING THAT GOD HAS GIVEN THEM UP.

Quite a number now need to have their attention called to the antitype of this incident referred to by our Lord as typical. Quite a number are disposed to sympathize and fraternize with those who are under divine condemnation now, and as such sentenced to the second death, destruction, typified by the destruction of Sodom, which we are directly told was "set forth as an *example*" or type.—Jude 7.

Those who assume to be more gracious and long suffering than the Lord make of themselves opponents, who, instead of being students of the principles of righteousness, attempt to be judges and teachers of Jehovah. The proper attitude of heart accepts God's conduct as not only wiser, but more just than our own; and consequently when we see any who have ever enjoyed the light of present truth abandoned by the Lord and led into outer darkness, we are to conclude that before being thus abandoned there must have been in them "an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God." "He is faithful who hath promised," "If any man will do my Father's will, he shall know of my doctrine." Whoever therefore loses the doctrines of Christ after once having had them, has surely done more than get his head confused. His heart had separated from the Lord's ways previously; for as long as we abide in him as his "elect," it will not be possible for any of the snares of this evil day to entrap us, and none shall pluck us out of the hand of the Lord our Shepherd.

It is proper for us to be watchful of each other's welfare doctrinally as well as otherwise. When we see a brother walking contrary to the Lord's instruction into the snare of the wicked, we are to "have compassion," and while praying for him we are to use our best judgment as to how to help him, "making a difference" according to the circumstances of the case. Some should be dealt with energetically—"pulling them out of the fire." (Jude 22, 23.) But while we should always be on the alert to render assistance whenever needed, to convert a brother from the error of his ways (James 5:19, 20), we should make no such effort for him as would tend to make us fall from our own steadfastness into the error of the wicked.—2 Pet. 3:17.

When we see others walking in forbidden paths, in the way of transgressors, we are not to follow them there in order to help them out; but to show them the right path by keeping in it and calling to them. When we see some confusing themselves with doctrines and teachings of men, when they know that they are *fundamentally* wrong, we are not to wade through those doctrines in order to help them out; but we are to remind them that the study of any doctrine which will not square with the *foundation* is not only a misuse of consecrated time, but that *all trifling with that which we know to be error is wrong and dangerous, as all violations of conscience and principle are dangerous.* . . .

Remember that there must be something wrong at their hearts, else they would have no pleasure in the unfruitful works of darkness, but would rather reprove them; and their delight would be in the great divine plan of the ages. (Psa. 1:1-6.) Remember, too, that God has promised to keep and guide the minds of those whose hearts are loyal and true to him. We should, therefore, conclude that if the Lord is either thrusting anyone out of the light, as unworthy of it, into the outer darkness of the world, or if he is permitting unfaithful ones to be seduced by the great enemy, it is not our mission to follow them into the outer darkness in conversation, reading, etc., but to remain with the Lord and with those who walk in the light. . . .

Neither are we to waste sympathy upon those who depart. If we can neither persuade them nor pull them out of the fire, we must let them go, and should turn at once and render aid to others more worthy. When the Lord has put anyone out of the light (Matt. 22:13, 14), we cannot hope to bring them back. Had it been proper for them to stay in the light he would not have permitted them to be put out of it. . . .

Let us more and more be of one mind with the Lord. His friends only must be our friends; his enemies only our enemies. If we affiliate with the Lord's enemies we will at least get into a lukewarm condition towards him and his friends; and the lukewarm he will spew out of his mouth. And we want to cultivate warmth of heart toward all who trust in the precious blood and are consecrated to our Redeemer as the only Lord. There must be no lukewarmness there. Whatever their peculiarities according to the flesh, we cannot be otherwise than "brothers" to them in spirit, with all that helpfulness and sympathy which brotherhood in and with Christ implies.

But we will not, must not, cannot have *any* fellowship with the ungodly, the sinner against light and truth, nor the scorners of the grace of God. Whoever are our Lord's enemies must be our enemies, because enemies of the light, the truth, the way: and although if they are destitute we should feed them (Rom. 12:20), yet so long as they are the opponents and adversaries of the Lord's cause, of which Christ and his cross are the center, they are our adversaries and we theirs. The Lord loves positiveness with harmlessness, and of us it should be true, as it is prophetically written of our Lord and the true members of his body in Psalm 139:16-24.

Whoever therefore is being led of the Lord's messengers to the place of safety, as were Lot and his family delivered from the destruction of Sodom, let him "remember Lot's wife" and not look back or otherwise manifest sympathy with those whom the Lord has condemned and abandoned to destruction.—Z. '95, 202, 204.

Beloved, let us not be of those who draw back, or of those who faint by the way; for glorious will be the victory of faith and zeal. Blessed is he that shall endure unto the end.—Z. '95, 231.

WHOLESOME COUNSEL

Pro. 16:22-23.

Golden Text: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death."—Pro. 16:25.

The most important thought of this lesson is expressed in the Golden Text. It is a solemn warning against self-deception—against pursuing a course of conduct which is radically wrong, being opposed to the spirit and intent of the divine law, and yet which may be made to *seem* right by a line of false reasoning, suggested by the will of the flesh and *APPARENTLY founded upon the Word of God, yet denying its fundamental principles of righteousness.* The delusions of Satan also greatly help along such deceptions, and thus the blinded one is urged along in a course which seems to him to be right, but the end of which is death.

Christians should above all things guard themselves against the folly of this way. To do this, let us ever remember that, even though through Christ we have a reckoned standing of justification before God, the human heart which we still have is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9), and that it requires constant watching and purging to enable us to put in practice the Apostle Paul's rule,—In simplicity and godly sincerity have your conversation in the world. (2 Cor. 1:12.) To do this requires humility, sobriety, godliness. If the heart be puffed up with pride, or ambitious for vain-glory, or if it be selfish, or in any measure intoxicated with the spirit of the world, then beware; for there is great danger of getting into that way that SEEMETH right, to a man *because* blinded by his own perverse will or fleshly mind.

The best safeguard which a Christian can have against the snares of Satan is that understanding which is here (vs. 22) described as "a well-spring of life unto him that hath it." Such understanding is not merely that of the head, but of the heart specially; for, "With the *heart* man believeth unto righteousness," and "out of the *heart* are the issues of life." If the *heart be wrong,* the head will seek to justify it, and in so doing will pervert judgment and truth. Therefore, take heed, and "keep thy heart with all diligence."

Not only will the "wise and understanding heart" keep the feet in the paths of righteousness, but also "the heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips" (verse 23), so that he shall speak forth "words of truth and soberness," words of wisdom, of kindness and of love. How important that the fountain should be sweet, that thus the stream that issues from it may be healthful and refreshing to all within the range of its current! Truly, "pleasant words (of wisdom, of counsel and of loving kindness) are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones (in that they refresh and comfort and stimulate courage and thus fortify the soul and strengthen it to noble deeds)."—Verse 24.

How different is the picture of the ungodly man! (Verses 27-29.) "An ungodly man diggeth up evil (*apparently* finding a morbid satisfaction in searching for it), and in his lips there is a burning fire. A froward man *soweth strife,* and a whisperer separateth chief friends. A violent man enticeth his neighbor, and leadeth him into the way that is not good. He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things: moving his lips, he bringeth evil to pass." Thus, as Isaiah says, "The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."—Isaiah 57:20, 21.

But blessed is the man that hath learned the right ways of the Lord and walketh therein with a perfect heart. Such a one, unlike the wicked who go about digging up evil, delights himself in doing good and in speaking forth the words of truth and soberness. He is slow to anger, and studies carefully how to rule his own spirit, which is surely a great work and worthy of the ambition and effort of every Christian. (Verse 32.) How blessed (vs. 31) are the closing years of a long life devoted to this most worthy end of ruling one's own spirit in harmony with the principles and precepts of the Word of God; when, as Mr. Whittier has beautifully expressed it,—

"All the jarring notes of life
Seem blending in a psalm,
And all the angles of the strife
Are rounding into calm."

and when the hallowed influences of ripened Christian graces are manifest to every beholder. Truly, "the hoary head is a crown of glory if it be found in the way of righteousness." But if not, it is but a monument of folly and its ripened evil fruitage is most undesirable.

The statement of verse 33 is to the effect that God's overruling power takes cognizance of even those things which men may regard as mere chance, and that nothing can come to pass without his knowledge and permission, and that eventually all things will be overruled to the accomplishment of his purposes.—Z, '96, 223, 224.

OPPOSITION FROM SELFISH HEARTS

It is well to notice sharply that the one who made the greatest ado on behalf of the poor, and who objected most to Mary's expression of her devotion, was the thief and murderer, Judas. And the principle, to a considerable extent, seems to hold good all down throughout this Gospel age: that those who make the greatest outcry on behalf of mission work *and in opposition to the expenditure of costly time in the anointing and blessing of the consecrated members of the body of Christ,* are not always those who have the interests of the heathen exclusively at heart, but are frequently those who have an "axe to grind," a selfish interest in some way to serve. And not infrequently these *hypocrites* mislead others of the Lord's dear people, who are thoroughly conscientious, even as Judas, by his sophistry, for a time misled the other apostles into indignation against Mary for the doing of the very thing which was pleasing to the Lord, and on account of which he decreed that wherever this Gospel should be preached her conduct should be mentioned as a memorial.

And so it is today: this gospel is preached in more than 350 languages—to every important nation in the world. But we presume that it was not merely Mary that our Lord wished to memorialize, but especially her deed: he wished that all who should know the good tidings should know also of his appreciation of such devotion to him, to his body, and that the more it costs us the more he appreciates it. In view of this, let each one who would be pleasing in the Lord's sight seek continually to pour the perfume from his heart and life upon other members of the body of Christ, and let him realize that in so doing he will not only be pleasing to the Lord, but will be receiving also a blessing himself; for as no alabaster vase could pour forth perfumes upon others without itself being thoroughly involved in the perfume, so our hearts, as they pour forth upon others of the members of the body the sweet perfume of love and devotion to the Lord and his cause, will be sure to bring a blessing to ourselves, even in the present life—our Lord's approval and benediction now and everlastingly.

Some of the methods employed in connection with present endeavor to anoint the members of the Lord's "body" for burial,—with the perfume of his truth and grace—call down the condemnation of fellow-disciples . . . and will be misunderstood by many of the Lord's dear children,—and be *bitterly reproved* by those who are of the Judas spirit. Yet realizing the Lord's approval we have quite sufficient to make our cup of joy overflowing. *Fellow-disciples tell us that we should not be handing the meat in due season to the household of faith, but to sinners;* that we should not be seeking to anoint the saints with the sweet perfume of present truth, but should, on the contrary, be going to the outcasts of society. . . . *The perfume of the truth is only designed to fall upon "members of the body of Christ," and our expectations are that the Lord will guide it to these, and that to others it will be of no effect.* And since the members of the body of Christ, the consecrated ones, are so few, their anointing and their separation from Babylon, and their burial, will be comparatively unnoticed so far as numbers are concerned,—tho their taking away of the "salt" and the "light" of those systems, will indeed be a serious loss, conspiring to their downfall in the great time of trouble approaching.—Matt. 5:13, 14.

Let us not forget to note clearly and distinctly the wide difference between love and selfishness, as exemplified in the opposite courses of Mary and Judas. Mary, full of burning devotion, was willing to sacrifice much to honor, comfort and please her Lord. Judas not only was unwilling to sacrifice on his behalf, but on the contrary was willing to sell him to his enemies for thirty shekels—the price of a slave. Not only so, but the devotion of the one seemed not to impress the other favorably, but rather the reverse; the devotion of Mary, and our Lord's approval of it, seem to have aroused the opposite spirit in Judas, for he went straightway to negotiate with the chief priests for our Lord's betrayal into their hands.

It would appear from the Greek text, and the rendering of the same in the Revised Version, that Judas received the money for his work in advance: "They weighed unto him thirty pieces of silver." He completed the contract; he sold himself to work evil, and that against his benefactor, his Lord, of whose power he was fully conversant, and of which, indeed, he had received so abundantly that he himself had been enabled to heal the sick and cast out devils. How strange that any could be so perverse! *No doubt he had a way of reasoning the matter to himself which made his crime appear to him less heinous than it does to us. No doubt, also, others who today are willing less directly to sell the Lord for earthly advantage or influence or money find ways of excusing their perfidy;* but in proportion as our hearts are loyal and devoted, as was Mary's, in that same proportion will the Judas course appear heinous and impossible to us.

Yet these climaxes of character are not reached suddenly. Mary's love had been growing from the first; it was greatly strengthened by her course in sitting at the Master's feet and receiving from him spiritual nourishment, which our Lord declared to be a still better part or course than that pursued by her sister, tho the latter was not disapproved. Mary's faith and love had been still further increased as she witnessed the Lord's power in various ways, and especially at her brother's awakening from the tomb. She had cultivated this love and appreciation for the Lord until it filled her entire heart, and found its expression in the costly libation which she had just poured upon his head and his feet. Judas, on the other hand, had long been permitting the spirit of selfishness to more and more intrude upon his heart. . . . One lesson for us here is, to *cultivate* love and the appreciation of whatsoever things are just, good, lovely and pure; and to fight down and eradicate so far as possible (especially from our own hearts and lives) everything selfish, mean, ignoble, dishonorable.—Z. '00, 378-380.

THE "LITTLE FLOCK" AND THE "GREAT COMPANY"

While the number of those who wear the robe of Christ's righteousness is, as compared with the numbers of the world, small indeed, yet how large a proportion of these are not walking in white, but have their robes greatly spotted by contact with the world, the flesh and the devil —by unfaithfulness or by carelessness, worldliness. . . . We refer to the true believers, who have made a full consecration of themselves to the Lord, and who for the sake of worldly advantages or earthly hopes or friendships *or for the favors of nominal churches,* are failing to live according to their covenant and privileges, and are thus, like Esau of old, selling their *birthright* (as new creatures in Christ) for a mess of pottage. Is there no hope for these, who fail to be overcomers, who fail to walk in white, who fail to gain the crown and the immortality to be bestowed only upon the "elect," "worthy," "overcomers?"

Yes, thank God! We rejoice that there is hope for these, *because* they have not cast off their wedding garments, even though they have gotten them sadly spotted and soiled by contact with the world. The class referred to are neither open nor wilful sinners, but those who unwisely are seeking to please and serve the Lord and to please and serve themselves and the world—"foolish virgins." They make a failure in every direction so far as pleasing is concerned: they do not please the Lord, they do not please themselves and they are not half satisfactory to the worldly. The only ground upon which divine favor can continue with them at all and could go after them to reclaim them is the merit of the robe of Christ's righteousness, which they still love and wear, although they have not loved it sufficiently to keep it unspotted. But, he who began the good work in them will continue it and perfect it for all who really love and trust him—even though it be completed in the great tribulation at the inauguration of the Millennium or "the day of Jesus Chrst." (Phil. 1:6.) Since Christ became the surety for all who at heart still trust him, although not overcoming by complete self-sacrifice in full obedience to his instructions, it does not surprise us that he points out in his last communication to his Church how he will deal with this numerous class of his followers and how it will result to them,—although he made no such proposition in their "call."

After telling of the sealing of the elect class, the spiritual Israel, the peculiar people zealous of good works, the little flock, the bride, the overcomers, a definite, predetermined number, "a hundred and forty and four thousand," gathered out of Babylon before the winds of the great tribulation are let loose upon the world, all of them bearing the seal or mark of God's favor in their foreheads—a noticeable *intellectual* evidence of divine favor, the impress of the spirit of the truth as well as the word of truth, our Lord shows us the "great multitude" of his followers, "whose number no man is able to tell" (that is, it is not a foreordained or fixed number,—none were called to be of this company), who will eventually stand before the Lord "clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands," crying "salvation to our God which sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb." Who are these who are not of the bride, the elect class, the overcomers, is the question? The answer is "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have *washed* their robes, and *made them white* in the blood of the Lamb. *Therefore* are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple."—Rev. 7:9, 10, 13-15.

The marks of distinction between this "great company" and the "little flock" are very pronounced, both as respects their present course and their future blessing. The faithful overcomers watch and keep their garments unspotted from the world. And this is given as one of the special conditions of acceptance as "overcomers" to joint-heirship with the Lord—"they have not defiled their garments." (Rev. 3:4.) They have kept "their garments unspotted from the world." They have not been willing to permit sin to contaminate them and to separate them from the Lord, but have quickly applied for and obtained the precious blood to remove every stain. They are so heartily opposed to sin and so earnest about the keeping of this garment unspotted that the adversary gets no hold upon them—"the wicked one catcheth them not." (1 John 5:18.) All of this indicates a full submission of their wills to the will of Christ—they are "dead with him," and hence could not willingly practice sin. Their reward is the crown of life, immortality, to be seated in the throne, and to constitute the temple of which our Lord is the cap-stone, the chief corner-stone. Now contrast with these the "great company": lacking the intense love and zeal of the overcomers, they do not keep their garments with sufficient care, and as a result they lose all the rewards promised the overcomers; and, having failed in the race, they would get nothing, if it were not for our Lord's grace.

But God's grace cannot admit to heavenly perfection those who have not robes of spotless righteousness; and hence we are shown that these who have not cared for their garments and kept them white must be put through a severe experience before they can in any sense of the word be sharers of heavenly favors. These severe experiences are shown in the symbol as *washing their robes* in a great *tribulation*. But to show that not the penances or sufferings would cleanse the robes, though these might be necessary as proper punishments and disciplines, it is particularly stated that these efficacy for the cleansing is the *"blood* of the Lamb." Many will thus be purged, purified, and their garment, now sullied by contact with the world, often in the garb of nominal Churchianity, will be cleansed of every guilty stain, when they, realizing the folly of their course, shall repentantly appeal to the Lord and use his help.

But sad disappointment attach to the experiences of this company: it is because they *fear* the reproaches of Christ that they shirk present privileges and opportunities for walking with him in white in the "sufferings of this present time": behold, they not only miss the present joy and rejoicing of those who are faithful, but eventually they must come through *still greater* sufferings, if they would attain even to a lower place. Although loving the Lord and his people they are somewhat ashamed of them and hide, as it were, their faces from them in the presence of the worldly: and behold the Master at his coming for his "bride" cannot confess their names in the presence of the Father and the holy angels. The little flock is informed of the Bridegroom's care, and obediently watching she shall be "accounted worthy to escape all those things coming upon the world" (including the great tribulation), but the "great company," *although the Lord's people, in that they have not rejected him, must be treated like the hypocrites and pass through the great tribulation in order to their purification.* These, be it observed, are not a class who in any sense repudiate the Lord, they are not of those who "draw back" from the Lord, for in such he declares he has "no pleasure" (Heb. 10:38): and the Apostle declares that such "draw back unto *perdition*—Second Death." On the contrary, these are still "virgins," but foolish in that they are vainly trying to please and serve both God and mammon. They are wasting precious opportunities trying to find an *easier way* of following their Lord than "being made comfortable unto *his death.*"

We rejoice that ultimately these will sing praises to the Lord, and be glad in his wondrous grace. But we notice that even after their robes will be washed white in the time of trouble by the blood of the Lamb and in much tribulation, they wear no crowns as overcomers; but, having finally overcome, they are granted palms as emblems of their victory through Christ; and although they can never be the living temple of which Christ is the Head, we are told they shall be *servants* in that temple; and although they shall never sit in the throne, they are highly privileged to serve "before the throne." Grand and glorious privileges will be theirs, but Oh, they will lose the great prize, having sold it for the mess of pottage of present seeming advantage, which proves unsatisfying and brings bitter after results. What exhortation to holiness, to complete consecration to his will, could be stronger than this supplied by our Lord's statement of the results of more and of less faithfulness?

Probably the majority of this "great company" of tribulation saints are living today; for at no time in the past was there the same degree of knowledge of God and his Word, except in the early Church of apostolic times: never did so many profess to be the Lord's by consecration; *and never were there so many subtle seductions from the "narrow way" of self-sacrifice.* In centuries past the cleavage between the Lord's people and the world's people was much more distinct than today: persecution was more open and recognized, and while fewer named the name of Christ, they counted and appreciated the cost, as the larger number of today do not. (We, of course, ignore the professions and "great swelling words" of anti-Christ.) However, there was a great time of trouble in the end of the Jewish age in which many unclean may have been permitted to wash their robes white in the blood of the Lamb. And since then our Lord has not been without the power to bring as many as he chose through great tribulations for purification. Since the "overcomers" suffer *with* Christ voluntarily and the "great company" suffer because of Christ *involuntarily,* it might be difficult, if not impossible, for any except the Lord and the sufferers to know whether they suffered as self-sacrificers or as unwilling "tribulation" saints: but in the end of this age it will be different; *for the overcomers will be taken to glory before the closing tribulation is fully poured out upon "Babylon."*—Z. '97, 160, 161, 162.

Let us prove our appreciation of the glorious Light by our loyalty and faithfulness, working out our salvation with fear and trembling.—Z. '14, 230.

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

"Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it."—I Cor. 4:12.

SINCE GOD HIMSELF is Love, the very highest ideal of perfection which he has given to His people is the standard of Love. We cannot imagine a higher standard than this, nor one more difficult to attain. It is the special characteristic without which none will get the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This mark of perfection was stamped on our Lord. He delighted to do the Father's will in *all* respects, even to the extent of *laying down His life* for those who, on account of Adam's sin, were under the sentence of death.

Our Lord did not, however, need to run toward this mark of perfect love; for He was *always perfect*—"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." (Heb. 7:26.) The Church, on the contrary, are naturally imperfect and fallen by heredity; but we have been washed from all stain of guilt in the blood of the Lamb. The mark of perfect love *we* attain *gradually*. We first reach perfection of heart intention, and then we pass through experiences which crystallize our characters in righteousness. In all these trials and difficulties, we must demonstrate that, if our physical organism were perfect, we would always do Gods holy will.

As we see this quality of love in our Lord Jesus, we appreciate it, even though we realize that we are not up to the standard which God requires. Nevertheless, our great desire is that we have perfect love for everything in harmony with the will of God. After we have reached perfection of heart intention, the test is no longer upon us of *attaining the* mark, but of *pressing down upon that* mark *until our character has been crystallized*. As the Apostle Paul says, "Having done all, STAND." (Eph. 6:13.) We do not progress beyond *perfect love;* for no one can do more than to have a full desire that God's will be done in him. He could do no more, whether he lived five years longer or fifty years. Perfect love is the mark toward which he pressed and he can attain no higher standard.

While one stands at the mark of Love, the *tests* grow *stronger*. We pass through experiences—often trivial enough—which tempt us to malice, envy, anger and strife. If we are overcome by these tests, and fall away from the condition of *perfect love,* we shall lose the prize for which we are running. (Phil. 3:14.) . . .

GENEROSITY AND BENEVOLENCE CHARACTERISTIC OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

Our Lord desires to see in His followers the disposition to overcome the weaknesses and tendencies of the fallen condition and to follow in His footsteps. Of Him it is written, "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow in His steps; . . . who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not." (1 Peter 2:21-23.) To be reviled is to be made to *appear vile,* to be evil spoken of, slandered. The natural tendency of all is to resent injustice, to render evil for evil, to give as good as we get —and a little more, if possible. This is the natural inclination because we are in the fallen condition, unbalanced in our minds.

Our Lord's teaching is all the opposite of the spirit of reviling. No matter how much we are reviled, we are not to revile in return; no matter how much we are persecuted, we are not to persecute in return. This is the Law of the New Creation. Instead of reviling again, we are to *bless*. This does not mean that when one has said a slanderous thing of us, we are to say, "God bless you;" but that if the person is in difficulty and needs help, we are to overlook altogether what he has done to us, and be just as ready to help him as any other person . . .

Our faith is greatly strengthened by considering the course of our Lord and noting the similarity between His experiences and ours. Both He and His Apostles were persecuted by the Jewish household of faith. The whole Jewish nation professed to be God's people; and our Lord recognized them as His own, as it is written. (John 1:11.) Yet, when "He came unto His own," they received Him not, but persecuted Him and even crucified Him. Later, they persecuted His Apostles and their followers.

Apparently the household of faith has had a monopoly of persecutions. All down the Gospel Age, those who have professed to be God's people have persecuted others. Both Catholics and Protestants have persecuted each other and the Jews, God's chosen people.

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP.

The majority of persecutions have been by those who professed to be the people of God, many of whom really thought they were.

The persecutions of today are of the same kind. They come from those who *profess* to be the Lord's people. In harmony with this fact is the Scripture which says, "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My namesake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." (Isa. 66:5.) . . . As a rule, their opposition is not for personal reasons, but on account of some doctrinal point, which they do not see in the same light as do those whom they persecute.

It behooves the Lord's people to look with great sympathy upon those who may be their persecutors. We recall instances where persecution has been carried on with the thought that the persecutors were doing the will of God. Those who persecuted the Lord Jesus were to some degree ignorant of who He was. In Acts 3:17, St. Peter says, "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." St. Paul, says, "Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." (1 Cor. 2:8.) When Saul of Tarsus persecuted St. Stephen and others of the early Church, he verily thought that he did God service, as he himself afterwards tells us.—Acts 26:9-11.

FIDELITY TO THE TRUTH A CAUSE OF PERSECUTION.

All down through the Gospel Age, those who have been faithful to the Truth of God have been put "out of the synagague." . . .

Those who had charge of the synagogues were not always *bad* people, but they were *mistaken,* as was Saul of Tarsus when he haled men and women to prison. (Acts 8:3.) *The same conditions exist today*. The darkness hateth the light. When any become enlightened in the Word of God, they are told, "If you stay with us, you must not present these matters." Those who are loyal to God are in this way forced out of the synagogues. . . .

The persecutions of today are different from those of any other period of history. Many faithful followers of the Lord are reproved and slandered for their loyalty to the Word of God. Our Lord's words, however, warrant us in expecting that those who are faithful to Him will be evil spoken of, even as He was. With His words before our minds, we should not be surprised at false charges and false insinuations made against His true followers in proportion to their prominence as His servants.

Our Lord's warning that men "shall say *all manner of evil* against you *falsely for My sake*" (Matt. 5:11), does not imply that those who malign the true Christian will say, "We do this to you for Christ's sake, because you are one of His followers." We have never heard of any one who was thus persecuted, and therefore such a course cannot be what our Lord meant. Evidently His meaning was that His followers, honorable, moderate, truthful, honest, virtuous, possessing the spirit of a sound mind, like Himself, would be highly esteemed amongst the nominally religious, were it not for their LOYALTY to the Word of God. . . .

These conditions are also a test to the Lord's people, to prove whether they are willing to endure these persecutions and oppositions cheerfully, as a part of the cost of being disciples of Christ. If under the pressure they revile in return and slander and backbite, they are thus demonstrating their unfitness to have a place in the Kingdom. If, on the other hand, they receive these lessons with patience and long-suffering, they will develop more of the character-likeness of their Redeemer and thus become more worthy of a share with Him in the future glory.

Our Lord's declaration, "Ye are the salt of the earth," may very properly be applied to those of the followers of the Lord who give heed to His teachings and who cultivate His character-likeness. As salt is useful in arresting decomposition, so the influence of these faithful ones is preservative. At the time of the First Advent, the world was in a condition in which it would probably have hastened to degeneracy and decay, but for the introduction of the preservative influence extending from the members of the Body of Christ. That influence is still manifest in so-called Christendom.

Even today, although the truly consecrated believers in the great Redeemer are confessedly few in number, yet the saltness from the teachings of the Savior has a wide influence upon the world. Without it, doubtless, corruption and a complete collapse would have come long ago. In spite of it, we see very corrupting and corrupt influences at work everywhere; and the wider our horizon, the more general our information, the more we realize the truth of this statement. When the last member of the Body of Christ shall have passed beyond the veil, the salt will be gone. Then corruption will take hold swiftly, and the result will be the great time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.—Matt. 24:21; Dan. 12:1.

The Scriptures point out the fact that the Lord's consecrated people belong so completely to Him that in all their afflictions He is afflicted. (Isa. 63:9.) When Saul of Tarsus was persecuting the early Church, our Lord called out to him on the way to Damascus, and said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am *Jesus,* whom thou *persecutest.*" (Acts 9:4, 5.) Saul was not persecuting the glorified Savior directly, but he was persecuting the *followers* of Jesus—not the *New Creatures,* but the *flesh.* Since then, our Lord adopts the flesh of His followers as His, the Church is said to be filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.—Col. 1:24.

Throughout the Gospel Age, the world has been blind to the fact that it has persecuted the Church of Christ—those whom God has chosen to be joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 8:17.) When later the eyes of mankind shall have been opened, they will realize what they have done, and will be very much ashamed of their conduct. After Saul of Tarsus saw that he had been fighting against God, his whole course of life was changed.

THE ANTITYPICAL BURNING OUTSIDE THE CAMP.

As our Lord suffered in the flesh, so will also those who are members of the Church, which is His Body. (Eph. 1:22, 23.) St. Peter admonishes us to expect this, saying, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same mind." (1 Pet. 4:1.) It is the *flesh,* not the *New Creature,* that *suffers.* While we are suffering in the flesh we are also being developed in the spirit. . . .

The antitypical sacrificing began at the time of our Lord's consecration, which was His full surrender of His life to God, to be used in any way that the Father saw fit and that His providences might direct. The Church follows in His steps. Our consecration is our death to the world, to earthly hopes, aims and ambitions. In our Lord's case, we see that His sacrifical death not only meant the giving away of His physical strength in healing, teaching, etc., but included also the suffering resulting from the opposition of those about Him. Even from members of His own family He experienced ostracism. So Jesus died daily.

In proportion as we are faithful to our Heavenly Father and to the terms of our consecration, we shall have similar experiences. Faithfulness to our covenant of sacrifice will bring upon us opposition from the world, the flesh and the Devil. PARTICULARLY WILL OUR PERSECUTION COME FROM THOSE CHRISTIANS WHO ARE NOT DEVELOPED SUFFICIENTLY TO APPRECIATE MATTERS FROM THE PROPER STANDPOINT.

St. Paul, in speaking of his own case, says that he was dying daily. (1 Cor. 15:31.) This statement applies to all who are laying down their lives in the Lord's service. Sometimes it is by the expenditure of physical strength; sometimes it is by a stab from some one who has hurt us, wounded us, injured us with his tongue. In the type, this kind of experience is represented by the burning of the flesh outside the camp, a place which typifies the outcast condition.

The faithful servants of the Lord will be ostracised by the world, as our Lord foretold. (Matt. 24:9; John 16:1-3.) Their attitude of full consecration to do the Father's will is not appreciated; for to the world it seems to be foolish. It is a reproof. As our Lord said, "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."—John 3:20.

To be faithful unto death is a part of the covenant of sacrifice. In some instances, death may come early; in others, it may come late. St. Stephen was faithful unto death, which came early in his Christian experience; St. Peter was also faithful, but met his death after a long lifetime. The promise to the overcomer is, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10.) "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him."—2 Tim. 2:12. Z., '13, 35, 37.

Love—love for the Lord, for the truth and for righteousness—must inspire us, or we shall never be victors. Love alone will keep us faithful even unto death, and make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Where fervent love rules in the heart, it implies that the heart is *FULLY SUBMITTED* TO THE LORD, and that means that nine-tenths of the battle is already won. But even then, as the Apostle says (Jude 21), we must *keep* ourselves in the love of God, in watchfulness and prayer and zeal; and grace will abound where love abounds.—Z. '95, 93.

Ah! it requires a great deal of truth to stand firmly as a soldier of the cross today.—Z. '95, 63.

BE STRONG AND OF GOOD COURAGE

Joshua 1:1-11.

Joshua, the newly appointed leader of Israel, had been Moses' "minister," or servant, not in a menial sense, but in that higher sense in which we speak of "ministers of the Lord," Ministers of State, Prime Ministers, etc. He was eighty years of age at this time, and hence must have been forty when Israel left Egypt. He was of the tribe of Ephriam, of one of its leading families, his grandfather, Elishama, having been a captain of the army of the Ephraimites, 40,500 in number, at the organization of the Israelites soon after the exodus. We find Joshua with Moses as his special companion, in Mt. Sinai; we find him again as the representative of Moses, the general of all Israel in the first battle fought with the Amalekites; we find him again one of the leading men of all the tribes, sent to spy out the land of promise, and on this occasion ne and Caleb were the only two whose faith in the Lord enabled them to return a favorable report, and, as we have already seen, in the giving of this report these men hazarded their lives;—so great was the chagrin and disappointment of the Israelites, and so fully were they in sympathy with the report of the majority.

All these events seem to indicate that Joshua was a man of large faith and large courage; moreover, we remember that notwithstanding his high position as Moses' chosen minister, he seems to have been entirely void of that ambition which led to the overthrow of Korah, Dathan and Abiram and many of the princes of Israel, and which previously had affected Miriam and Aaron. Although he is not mentioned as being so meek as Moses, we may, from all these considerations, judge that the one whom the Lord chose for Moses' successor was indeed a meek man, and that his courage, exemplified in every feature of his history, was the result of his faith in the Lord and not the result of self-confidence. The lesson to be drawn from this by spiritual Israel is the one mentioned by your Lord, namely, "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Luke 14:11.) In this Joshua was a type of our Lord Jesus who, in turn, is the pattern which must be followed by all those who would be finally acceptable in the Lord. The Apostle's argument along this line, to all the spiritual Israelites, is, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."—1 Pet. 5:6.

Israel unquestioningly accepted the Lord's choice of a leader. As a people they were evidently learning something by their experience in the wilderness training school. At the beginning of their sojourn they were scarcely willing to recognize even Moses; but now they had come along so far as to be able to see that the Lord was their real Leader, and that even though Moses had died without bringing them into the promised land, God who had made the promise of Canaan to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and themselves, was abundantly able to accomplish his promise, and hence they were willing to accept whatever leadership the Lord should indicate. Spiritual Israelites, too, are to learn the same lesson; human leaders are important in their way—in so far as they are the divine choice—so far as we can see fulfilled in them the Lord's promised guidance of his people. *But we are never to think of human leaders as indispensable; and God is likely to do again as in this case of Moses; namely, to remove a trusted leader and to appoint another in his stead, to the intent that his people may learn that he is their real Leader, that with him as their Guide they will surely have success, and that without him all earthly leadership would be in vain.*

As we have seen, Moses prefigured the Law, the school-master which was to bring God's people to the promised land, to the promised blessing, restitution, etc. We have seen that as Israel was unready to enter in and to possess the land because of lack of faith in the beginning and, therefore, had its wilderness journey extended to 40 years, so on account of lack of faith at our Lord's first advent they were prevented from joining with him in the restitution work and were made to wander to gain further experiences and leadings during the past nineteen centuries; and now at the close of these experiences, they, as well as spiritual Israel, are again on the borders of the land of promise—the Millennial Kingdom. This time Joshua will take command, the Jordan will be crossed and the gracious promises begin to have their fulfillment. Meantime, the Joshua-class, the Church, has been in process of development, and after the great time of trouble which is near at hand, the world in general will be ready to follow the leadership of Jesus as it is written of that time, "Many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths."—Micah 4:2.

As, meantime, Joshua needed encouragement, so now the Lord's consecrated ones, the members of the body of Christ, need encouragement, need to have pointed out to them the sureness of the divine promise, its lengths and breadths and depths, just as the Lord pointed out to Joshua the land of promise, from the wilderness to Mt. Lebanon, and eastward to the river Euphrates and westward to the Mediterranean Sea. Does faith waver and are we inclined to wonder how it will be possible for the new dispensation to accomplish such wonderful things as are necessary to be accomplished for the blessing and uplifting of the world of mankind? If so, let us look backward and see how the divine power was exercised in a miraculous manner, not only through Moses at the crossing of the Red Sea, and in the giving of the manna, in the victory of the Amalekites and in the water from the rock, but let us also notice how the Lord's providences were miraculously with Israel in various ways during the period of their favor, and let us remember that this same power of God in still larger measure is to be with the antitype of Moses, with the new Leader of the world, the great Messiah—Christ, the Head and the Church, his body, in the work of blessing and restitution on behalf of all those who shall, under that full enlightenment, desire to be the people of God. As it was God with Moses and God with Joshua that brought the victories, etc., so it will be the power of God with the Church that will bring the coming victories. "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath." (Psa. 110:5.) "I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (Psa. 2:8.) Again the Apostle declares that the Millennial victory of Christ shall be by and through the Father's power. (1 Cor. 15:27.) As none were able to stand before Joshua as the Lord's representative, so none of the great forces of evil and the obstructions now in the pathway of the fulfillment of God's promises shall stand; all must fall before the antitypical Joshua. "As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." (Rom. 14:11.) Satan himself shall be amongst these great enemies to be overthrown and utterly destroyed, and all of his works of evil—death itself being finally completely blotted out as an opponent of those in harmony with God and approved by him,—all others having been destroyed in the Second Death, which is not an enemy either to God or to those who are in accord with him or to any principle of righteousness or truth or goodness.

The land of promise is here mentioned as being the "Land of the Hittites." Higher Critics were once inclined to think this reference to the Hittites an egregious error because they could find no record of such a people, and because from their standpoint the Bible is to be considered on a lower plane than are the secular histories of the world. However, all this has been changed because in the last few years excavations made in Assyria have disclosed ancient tablets whose testimony fully corroborates the statement that the Hittites were at this time a mighty people. Those who discount the Bible statements are at a disadvantage, while those who accept them are sure to be on the right side and, sooner or later, to have confidence and faith justified by evidence.

Three times in this lesson is Joshua encouraged by the Lord, "Be strong and of a good courage," "Be thou strong and very courageous," etc. (vs. 6, 7, 9). There are different kinds of courage; one sort is begotten of egotism and self-reliance, another kind is . . . begotten of a recklessness which fails to take into account the difficulties of the situation, but the courage which the Lord inculcates and which all the spiritual Israelites are to seek to possess is the one which, while coolly and calmly discerning the trials and difficulties of the way and while humbly realizing its insufficiency for the occasion, is supported by a faith in the Lord—a trust in the divine promises which enables them to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. This was to be Joshua's courage and it is to be ours in respect to all the things of the present life, as well as in respect to all the things of the Kingdom, confidence in the Lord whose servants we are, and whose work he has commissioned us to perform.—Z. '02:284-285.

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

A *full assurance* of faith is that faith which, if retained, will bring us off "more than conquerors," and make us at last members in full of the Royal Priesthood—in glory.—Z. '14, 89.

It is a fact worthy of notice that one-half of those called and consecrated to the typical priesthood (as underpriests, representing the consecrated of this age), forfeited their lives by offering the strange fire. If this proportion is typical of a similar loss amongst the called and consecrated of this age, it bids us be all the more upon our guard to make our calling and election sure.—Z. '95, 160.

The course of God's people at all times should be that marked out by the Master—full resignation to the will of God—full realization of God's supervision of all the interests of His Cause—and full trust that the results will work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.—Z. '14, 333.

No present attainments can be satisfactory to a sincere follower of Christ who studiously endeavors to copy the perfect pattern. It is only when we turn our eyes away from Christ that self-complacency can be exercised; for, in full view of the pattern, our shortcomings are ever manifest. And if in pride of heart we do lose sight of them ourselves, they only become the more manifest to others. Only in the realization of a continual growth into the likeness of Christ should the Christian find satisfaction.—Z. '95, 250.

The name Victor, or "Mighty with God," will be our name. It will apply to every one of the Lord's faithful ones as it applied to our Head. But only those who manifest His Spirit, only those who so love God that they will hold on to His promise and who will not let Him go without the blessing, will receive the fulfillment of the promise and will reign with Christ in glory and share His Throne.—Z. '14, 184.

The *fire* of this great Day shall "try every man's work, of what sort it is." It will prove who of the professed disciples of Christ have built upon Him as their Foundation with the gold, silver, and precious stones of Divine Truth, and thus have constructed a true, strong, worthy character, unswervingly loyal to the Lord; and it will prove who have built with wood, hay or stubble. It will likewise discover who have built upon a foundation of sand. —1 Cor. 3:11-15. Z. '14, 121.

Oh, how precious will be the heavenly treasures when we view them in the light of the new dispensation—as glorious realities uncorrupted and incorruptible! With what joy shall the faithful begin to realize them when first they hear the Master's welcome, "Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Then will follow the welcome of all the glorified fellow-members of the anointed body; and if the jubilant songs of the angels hailed the advent of our Lord in the flesh, can we imagine them to be silent when the anointed "body" is received into glory, their work in the flesh having been finished? Surely not: if "there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth," the glad notes of jubilee will be raised very high when the Church shall have finished her course and entered into her reward. And as the tidings spread to earth, through the established earthly phase of the Kingdom, all creatures in heaven and in earth will be rejoicing together.—Rev. 5:11-13. Z. '95, 134.

All who truthfully can say, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine," have not only the promise of the life that is to come, but also the promise of this present life. They hear the Master's voice saying, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the Age," and in the end of the Age he is to be specially near, specially precious, and is to reveal himself to his faithful in an especial manner, even before she is so changed as to behold him in his glory.—Z. '11, 86, 87.

Let us be so filled with the spirit of the Truth, the spirit of meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness and love, that we shall be a blessing to those in our homes, that they may take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus and have learned of Him; and that this blessing may thus overflow and abound in many hearts.—Z. '12, 48.

One of the very tests which he puts to the Church in the present time—testing us, however, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit, according to the intents of the heart—is our obedience to his Word and Providences. Only the submissive will pass the inspection. All the heady and high-minded and self-willed will surely be rejected. "Let us, therefore, humble ourselves under the mightly hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time."—1 Pet. 5:6. Z. '10-88.

"Take heed that ye despise not (that ye do not hate or in any way persecute) one of these little ones; for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." ("Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them that shall be the heirs of salvation?") "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." The intimation is plain that any persecution or ensnarement of these will surely be observed by the Lord, and the evil-doers will in due time be brought to justice. Though the Lord may permit persecutions to severely try his saints, it shall only accomplish their purification; for "all things shall work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."—Z. '95, 34.

The God of Israel is indeed ever present with His true people. He never forgets us, but is constantly looking out for our interests, guarding us in every time of danger, providing for our every need, both temporal and spiritual, whatever is best for the interest of the New Creature. He reads every thought of our hearts; He marks every impulse of devotion and love to Him; He shapes all the influences surrounding our lives for our disciplining and refining, and hearkens to our every cry for aid and comfort and sympathy and fellowship with Him. He is never for even a moment forgetful or off guard. "He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps." (Psalm 121.) If we call Him in the busy hours of the day, or in the silent watches of the night, He is near to uphold and sustain and protect, whether we can realize His presence at all times or not.

How blessed the assurance of such constant, abiding care and faithfulness! No real child of God is devoid of these evidences of his precious relationship to the Father—the God of Israel. And the saints who have been called with the Heavenly Calling, and are faithfully responding, are His true Israel in the highest sense, heirs of all His choicest promises. How goodly a heritage is ours!—Z. '14, 297.

The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and a reverential fear is always proper. But as God's people become intimately acquainted with Him, learning of His Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power, and realize that He is the Friend of all who love righteousness, they come to love God; and, as the Apostle declares, "Perfect love casteth out fear (dread to offend)", which signifies rest. The Lord's disciples were to realize their Heavenly Father's care for them and His Wisdom—that as He forgets not the sparrows, so He will not forget them; and that not even a hair of their heads could be injured without His knowledge and permission; that everything that He permits to come to His people, to His children, He assures them, will work out for them some blessing.—Z. '14, 28.

All the Lord's true followers are God's "little ones," and are subject to *special* Divine supervision, represented in our text (Matt. 18:10) as angel care. The messengers who have guarded over the lives of God's saintly few always have access to the Heavenly Father's presence, to make known the necessities of those whom they represent, for Divine Power is ever on the alert for the protection of these. Oh, how blessed the privilege of being children of God. Oh, how *wise* to continue so little, so humble, so child-like, as to abide in His love, and to be enabled to learn the necessary lessons, and be ultimately received with Messiah in His Kingdom honor and glory.—Z. '12, 347.

The test of Jesus' character was humility, resignation to the Father's will in everything, even unto death, even the death of the cross. This demonstrated His love to the Father, His loyalty to the principles represented in the Father's character and government. These are the tests upon all the followers of Jesus. Whoever has this love and this loyalty is, to that extent, a copy of God's dear Son—not in the flesh, but in the spirit.

Let us all be fully agreed as to the grand perfection of character of the Heavenly Father and of our Savior and as to the fact that this heart-desire must be in us if we would have the mind of Christ. It is for the Lord to permit increasing trials and tests to come upon us as we grow older and stronger. Sometimes He permits a great fight from within or without, or both; and the New Creature is put to the test of endurance. It is not the Lord's intention that these trying experiences shall crush the New Creature; but, on the contrary, that the putting forth of endeavor to resist the Adversary and every evil shall make the New Creature the stronger. We have the promise, "He will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with every temptation provide a way of escape."—1 Corinthians 10:13. Z. '16, 157.

O happy Dove! thus weak, thus safe;
  Do I resemble her?
Then to my soul, O Lord! vouchsafe
  A *dove-like* character.
Pure, harmless, gentle, full of love,
Make me in spirit, Lord, a Dove!"

INTERESTING LETTERS

Dear Brother McKercher:

Since last writing you our class has increased, so will send the names and wish you would please send them the Old Corn Gems from now on. You could send them to this address if it would be a saving to you.

Also will you please send us two more full sets of the Gems. Indeed, they are gems. Now we are realizing what it means to be spoken evil of by our brethren. They all seem to have the idea that we have gone out of the truth and are mentally unbalanced. We are happy to so suffer and to have this manifestation of God's love to us and to know where we are. The Lord bless you in your work of comforting the brethren.

Brother —— ——, of Chicago, was surely a comforter to us and spent a week with us proving these things whether they were true, and they found an echo in our hearts. We have organized and our three brothers are elders, and while they have never been elders before, we have had such helpful meetings that we run past our time.

The Lord hath worked miracles for us, that is, has done wonderful things for us, whereof we are glad.

Your sister by His grace,
F. L. G.—Illinois.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER FOURTEEN

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Our Faith Structure Must Have Proper Foundations

Matt. 7:21-29.

Our Lord's illustration shows the possibility of building upon two kinds of foundation—a worthy and unworthy sort. But let us notice before we go further that this parable does not represent the heathen in any sense of the word, nor does it represent any who, living in civilized lands, have the eyes of their understanding so beclouded by ignorance and superstition, and their ears so dulled by the god of this world, that they do not hear *distinctly* the Lord's message. The parable is addressed to him "That heareth these sayings of mine"—who understands my teaching. The heathen have no place under this designation, neither have the great majority of those who profess Churchianity.

The parable then most clearly finds its two classes in those who have heard the good tidings and who have received them; who outwardly have made consecration to the Lord, and who outwardly are building their hopes upon His promises. The hopes built upon the Lord's promises and unaccompanied by works are hopes built upon the sand. It is only a question of time until the great testing time shall come and such hopes will be shown to be worse than useless. They will be shown to have deceived their possessor, who thought himself safe in his assurances of a share in the Kingdom. Such hopes, such faith, as fail to obediently strive to do the Lord's will, such faith and hopes as consider that obedience is not essential to a place in the Kingdom, are falsely founded; their overthrow will come with great disaster.

On the contrary, those who build with OBEDIENCE, their hearts as well as their tongues confessing and honoring the Lord, their deeds corroborating their faith, and their fruits bearing testimony of their vital relationship with the Lord—these shall pass through all the storms of life and shall never be moved, never be shaken . . . .

The general tenor of this lesson is that all those who think it worth while to be on the Lords side at all in the present age will do wisely if, after counting the cost, they completely lay aside not only their besetting sins but their ambition and their hope *and every desire of an earthly kind*—that their entire interests may be devoted to the Lord, to knowing His will, to serving Him. These are they who really love the Lord more than they love houses or lands or father or mother or children OR SELF; these are the Lord's Jewels, who shall be joint-heirs with Him in the Kingdom and in the great work of blessing all the families of the earth in due time. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels."—Z. '04, 46.

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ALL OLD CORN GEM READERS PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:

Address all communications to Standfast Bible Students, ~~Box 654,~~ Portland, Ore. All checks, drafts or P. O. money orders should be made payable to Standfast Bible Students.

MY CONFIDENCE.

"You ask me do I fear?
Should that child fear
Whose Father owns earth's store of precious things;
Whose *Will* carves destinies, whose *Wish* sways kings;
Whose *Love surpasses* fondest mother-love,
And Whose unsleeping eye guards from above?

"My Father is the Lord; I am His child.
His storehouse groans beneath a golden weight,
And I shall never want, though sore my strait.
When danger threatens and the way seems drear,
My Father's guiding hand is ever near;
His Kindly counsel will my way attend
And bring me safely to my journey's end." —*Unknown.*
—Z. '12, 262.

Similarly with the oath of allegiance required by those who enter the army—they are required to swear allegiance to the king and obedience to the officers of the king in all things. This oath is not required of aliens, foreigners, and is objected to by Bible Students, not because they are opposed to law and order or unwilling to be regulated by the government under which they live, but because they have already given allegiance to the higher power—the Heavenly Lord. To them His words, His commands, etc., are paramount.

Of course, such aliens could not object to deportation, nor make any stand for personal rights which any other alien of any other government might not request.—Z. '16, 220.

We are all born with unsound minds. As to the degree of unsoundness we need not quarrel. The armament which the Lord gives us is not merely a knowledge of how to quote Scripture. Neither is it merely to have the ability to dispute and debate, though that ability is very good in its place. The real thing that God is looking for is in our hearts. He is not looking to see how much you know; for He could pump a good deal of knowledge into you in a few minutes if He so desired. But the Lord is looking to see to what extent you are meek, patient, fully submitted to His will.—Z. '16, 132.

And now, my reader, where do you stand? Are you in the Way which "seemeth right," but which leadeth to death, or are you in the *Narrow Way* which leadeth to life eternal? Are you trusting in yourself or in Christ? are you relying upon your own works, or are you reposing upon the finished work of Christ?—Z. '16, 44.

There are not many people in the world who are hoping to die soon; and it is only *our confidence* that makes *us* have this hope. If we did not have a strong confidence in the outcome, then we would not have the desire to pass beyond the vail.—Z. '14, 377.

The life of faith is an individual matter, as well of the heart as of the head. It is far more than an acceptance of doctrines which we consider Scriptural and therefore true; *it is the assimilation of that which we have proved to be the truth, so that its principles become our principles, and its promises our inspiration.* This is what it is to "believe to the saving of the soul." "As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Z. '95, 93.

Published by the Stand Fast Bible Students' under the supervision of members of a committee of seven.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER FOURTEEN

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL. Z. '18:51.

WAS JUDAS A HYPOCRITE?

It is difficult for any noble minded person to read the account of Judas' course without feeling a sense of righteous indignation—a disgust for the baseness of character which could thus betray, for thirty pieces of silver, the one whom he recognized as the noblest of men, whether or not he was sure that Jesus was the Messiah. It may not be amiss here to reflect that Judas did not reach this depth of iniquity ***suddenly,*** but rather that the disposition toward unrighteousness had grown upon him during the three years of his intimacy with the Master, when the reverse disposition should have had control.

At the time he was chosen to be an Apostle he was evidently a good man so far as outward appearance, at least, was concerned; and his name, which signifies "Praise," would seem to indicate that his parents had been of a religious cast of mind and had wished and, so to speak, had prophesied of him that he would be a messenger of God to sound forth His praise. And what a privilege and opportunity he enjoyed in this direction! . . .

Probably Judas had made the same profession of consecration as did the other disciples: "Lo, we have left all to follow Thee; what, therefore, shall we have?" And, with the others, he had left all, and perhaps, in a certain way, was very sincere and recognized that this was the Messiah. But Judas had a business turn of mind. He wished to be associated with such a great Kingdom as the Messiah would set up. So there was a measure of selfishness connected with his consecration. Perhaps this is true with *ALL OF US.* We are all sure that the Lord has a Kingdom and we hope to have a share in it. But this thought should be secondary. Our merit should be of a higher order than merely a desire for reward for service. . . .

Probably Judas began to think that Jesus could not manage affairs nearly so well as if He would allow Judas to "coach" Him a little. As time passed, he began to keep some of the money. Perhaps he thought, "Now things are not coming out very well. I will keep some of this money for the disciples and Jesus for a rainy day." But he was really thinking about Judas.

THE NECESSITY OF JUDGING OURSELVES

By following a similar course of reasoning MANY people persuade themselves that they are trying to help others, when really they are looking out for their own interests. Hence there is a necessity for judging ourselves. The new creature should get the old creature into a corner and cross-question him: "Why do you act thus and so? Are you sure that you did not have some ***selfish*** motive in this matter?" If Judas had thus examined himself it would have been better for him. But not having done so, he drifted farther and farther away from a right spirit. Finally he went to the chief priests and said, "What would you give me if I were to give Jesus over?" They said, so much. Then he turned the matter over in his mind for several hours. So when he was in the "upper chamber" his mind was abstracted and he sat quietly watching what the others were doing.

When our Lord washed the feet of His Apostles, before partaking of the Passover Supper, He intimated that as they had bathed (in accordance with the Jewish requirement of the putting away of all filth at the beginning of the Passover season) they merely needed now the rinsing of their feet, the cleansing of the members that had come in contact with the earth. "He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet to be clean every whit." (R. V.) Our Lord added, referring to Judas, "Ye are clean, but not all." This expression shows us very clearly that he had in mind a higher cleansing, of which this washing of their feet and their previous bath were but the figures.

The Lord knew that the hearts of His disciples were loyal. He had accepted them as His disciples and had reckonedly imputed to them the merit of His sacrifice as a covering of their blemishes, the full testimony of which would be given them by and by at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit testifying that the Father had accepted the Lord's atoning sacrifice on their behalf. There was one, however, of the number whose heart was not clean. Our Lord did not pass him by, but washed the feet of Judas with the rest, knowing the while of his perfidy, and that he had already bargained with the chief priests and was merely awaiting the opportune moment for carrying out of his malevolent scheme.

Our Lord's words, although not understood by the rest, must have been appreciated by Judas, as were His subsequent words. Our Lord went so far as to quote the very prophecy which marked Judas and his disloyalty, his violation of even the common hospitality. (Psa. 41:9.) None of these things moved Judas; none of these things appealed to his heart in such a manner as to change his course. We have thus strong evidence of the wilful intention which marked his crime and makes clear the meaning of our Lord's words when He called him the "son of perdition," and declared that it would have been better for him if he had never been born. . . .

"BETTER FOR THAT MAN IF HE HAD NOT BEEN BORN"

Jesus testified that His death would not be a victory on the part of His betrayer and His enemies, but in harmony with what had been written of Him by the Prophets. Nor are we to consider that Judas was simply fulfilling a prophecy irrespective of his own responsibility, his own wilfulness in the matter. Such a thought is negatived by our Lord's statement, "Woe unto the man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would have been better for that man if he had not been born." . . .

While Judas lived prior to Pentecost, we are to remember that he was one of the twelve upon whom Jesus had specially conferred a measure of His spirit—such a measure as enabled him, with the others, to perform miracles of healing, casting out devils, etc., *in the name of the Lord, as His representative,* using *His power.* The position of Judas, therefore, was one of special closeness to the Lord and to His personal instruction, both by precept and example. We remember our Lord's words to His disciples, "To *you* it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom; but *to them that are without these* things are spoken in parables."

All this privilege, opportunity, knowledge, contact, made Judas especially responsible. But his crime would have been inexcusable had it been against any ordinary person, and it was seriously intensified by being a crime against Him who spake and acted as never man spake or acted before. From this standpoint our Lord's declaration that Judas was the "Son of perdition" seems to have special import or weight, as implying that Judas had enjoyed a sufficiency of light and knowledge of righteousness to constitute a trial, and that his deliberate sin against such light and knowledge meant the Second Death.

But while hating such a character, loathing it, despising it, and seeking to go as far as possible in an opposite direction in our own characters, we are not to overlook the fact that there are amongst the Lord's professed disciples some who, in a less degree, commit a crime very similar to that of Judas; they sell their Lord, they betray Him, while professing to love Him! True, this cannot today be done in the same literal and personal manner, but the spirit of it may be seen occasionally, *we regret to say; we find some who really believe in Jesus, some who have consecrated their lives to be His followers; some who have been engaged in the ministry of His Truth, as Judas was there, but who are willing to sell the Lord for a mess of pottage*—for good things of this present life—for a salary, for a social position, for honor amongst men, for popularity and titles; *WHO ARE WILLING TO SELL EVEN THEIR LIPS, AS JUDAS DID; SO THAT WHILE PROFESSING TO HONOR AND SERVE THE LORD THEY ARE WILLING TO JOIN WITH THOSE WHO MISREPRESENT HIS CHARACTER, HIS PLAN, HIS WORD*—willing to join with those who seek to assassinate the Lord.

Ah, how well it is that each one ask himself the question raised upon the night of the Supper, "Lord, is it I?" And let none be too ready to excuse himself; but let each search earnestly his own heart and life and conduct to see that he is not in any way sacrificing the Truth and the Life for any consideration whatever.

More than thirty years ago we were inclined to think that all must come to a full knowledge of all truth ere they could be liable to the Second Death; but we have come to the conclusion from the general tenor of the Scriptures that *this is not the Lord's view and plan. On the contrary, deliberate and intelligent rejection of the FIRST PRINCIPLES of the Gospel seems to imply an unfitness for further favors, on the ground that he that is unfaithful in that which IS LEAST would be unfaithful also in MORE.*

Adam's knowledge of the Divine Plan was very slight; yet his disobedience brought the death penalty. The real grounds for sympathy and hope for the masses is the Apostle's statement that Satan has blinded their minds, misinterpreted the facts. (2 Cor. 4:4.) All such will by and by "see out of obscurity" when Satan shall be bound—during the Millennium.

We confess little hope for the Scribes and Pharisees who, when they could find no other fault, ascribed our Lord's good works to the Devil. As for Judas' tears—they were no better than those of Esau. (Heb. 12:17.) His remorse led him, not to a renewed or reformed life, but to self-destruction.—Heb. 6:6.

PETER, THE IMPULSIVE—JUDAS, THE DISLOYAL

While Judas betrayed our Lord, another disciple, an intimate friend and companion, denied Him. Peter's case we remember well. A good man, of strong character, he realized not his danger, and hence was not prepared for the arts of Satan, by which he was placed in so trying a position that his boasted courage fled, his wonted strength of character vanished, and he denied his Lord even with profanity! What a lesson to us of human frailty! How we ourselves might be overtaken and ensnared by the wiles of the Devil! How much each one needs to watch and pray lest he enter into temptation—lest he succumb to temptation! How much we need to remember the prayer the Lord gave us for an example: "Abandon us not in temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One!"

That was a fateful time for *Judas!* If the Adversary could so juggle, deceive and mislead the true-hearted Peter, because he was off his guard in watching and praying, what might we not expect he would be able to accomplish with Judas, whose heart was not right, who was selfish, self-seeking, ambitious, covetous! We do not wonder that Satan's victory over Judas was soon accomplished—that he fell quickly into the snare of the Adversary, and lent his heart and energy to the betrayal of the Master, for thirty pieces of silver! His case was very different from that of Peter, the loyal, the true, for the moment bewildered, off guard and fearful. Although the danger was the same in either case, their hearts were in different conditions.

Is it not so with all the Lord's followers? Is not this the secret of the results of temptation as they surely come to each one of us?

The Judas class of today and always are those who, when temptation comes, receive it, entertain it, enter into the spirit of the ambition or otherwise strong allurement, and are swallowed up by it. The Peter class has also been with us ever since; and today even the true-hearted, not sufficiently watching and praying and on guard against the Adversary's allurements, are at times taken unawares, and for a moment dishonor, not only the Lord, but their own hearts and consciences also.

The difference between these two classes is in the heart condition; the Peter class do those things which they do not wish to do, and their difficulty lies evidently in the weakness of their flesh, in the power of the Adversary, and in the failure to lay hold upon the help which the Lord has promised, the succor in their time of need.

The Judas class, on the contrary, are those whose hearts are not loyal, but selfish, and who, therefore, enter into the Adversary's schemes heartily, and are not, in their wrong course, going contrary to their own wills, but in harmony therewith. The difference in God's sight is seen in that, *although both Peter and Judas were penitent,* the one was accepted back to Divine favor, but the other was not. The one who was merely entrapped, but who at heart was not disloyal, was restored and blessed; the other, though not without conscience, as shown by his later remorse, was without the genuine loyalty of heart which in the Lord's sight is indispensable, and the absence of which, considering Judas' intimate acquaintance with the Lord, was inexcusable.

The Lord's words to Peter, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat; but I HAVE PRAYED FOR THEE, THAT THY FAITH FAIL NOT" (Luke 22:31, 32), give us the assurance that, because of this difference in the hearts of the two men, our Lord could properly be the Advocate of the one before the Father, but not the Advocate of the other. He could stand for and represent the one who at heart was loyal to Him, however weak his flesh, however careless he might have been of the Divine provision for his protection. He was still one of the Lord's sheep, and therefore subject to the Shepherd's care. He was still of the Lord's members, subject to the oversight and interest of the Head. He was still a member of the Lord's espoused virgin Church, whom our Lord loved and for whom He gave His life and for whom, therefore, He might properly make supplication as the betrothed Bridegroom.

But in the case of Judas, his heart being alienated through selfishness, any appreciation and love which he possessed for the Lord at the beginning of His ministry had evidently died, swallowed up of selfishness and ambition; and into that heart, thus fully withdrawn from the Lord, we are told that Satan entered. By thus willingly withdrawing his heart and strength and consecration from the Lord, and lending the same by deliberate intention to self-seeking, he became a tool of the Adversary. As our Master said, "It must needs be that offenses come (that He should be crucified), but woe unto that man by whom the offense cometh!"

THE HARVEST A TIME OF SEPARATION

Although we know in advance that none of the Lord's disciples, true at heart, will be plucked out of His hands by the Adversary, nevertheless we fancy that we can sympathize to some extent with our Lord's feelings when He exhorted the disciples, "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation."

True, Jesus knew who it was that should betray Him, and was, therefore, neither surprised nor disconcerted because of Judas' course; and yet, undoubtedly, the thought that one who had eaten bread with Him should "lift up his heel against Him" (John 13:18) must have had a saddening effect upon our dear Master, who could assuredly have pity for even His bitterest enemies as well as those who, Peter like, fail at first to withstand the Adversary's assault, but who subsequently are recovered by Divine mercy and aid.

Since the Body of Christ is *one,* and since our Lord declares that whatsoever is done to one of the least of His members is done unto Him, it follows that the Judas class and the Peter class, all down through the Gospel Age to the present moment, have been betraying or denying the Lord in proportion as they have betrayed or denied His members. We, therefore, should note the significance of His statement to Peter, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not!"

For all of the Peter class the Lord is the Head, the Representative, the Advocate before the Father. Without His aid, without His appearance for us and the application to us of the merit of His own sacrifice, none of us could stand; all would be judged unworthy, unfit to have part or lot in the great blessings which the Lord had invited us to share with Jesus. And as the Master prayed for such, and now intercedes for such, and makes good their unwilling imperfections, so should all who have His spirit feel kindly, generously, sympathetically, and speak helpfully to the Peter class. But as the Master had no such words of sympathy for Judas, the open and premeditated enemy and traitor, so likewise, whatever our sorrowful feelings for such may be, there is no room for any expression of sympathy or co-operation in their evil work, as for any of the Apostles to have co-operated with Judas would have meant a share in his evil deeds.

However much sympathy we may feel with Peter and others of similar character and experience, however much we may rejoice with him that the Lord prayed for him so that his carelessness in watching and praying for himself did not result in his undoing and his loss of relationship to the Lord—nevertheless, we should strive not to be of the Peter class, but of the class represented by the Lord Himself. Let us be of the watching, praying, faithful kind, who will not be overtaken by the Adversary's temptations of the present time.

We are in the Harvest of the Gospel Age; the separation of the wheat from the tares is due; and, more than this, the separation of the chaff from the wheat is also due—a sifting process. While this figure may to some extent have fit the experiences of the Church in the past, we are sure that it specially applies to the Church in the "ends of the ages"—to those who were living in the end, or harvest, of the Jewish Age, and to those who are now living in the end, or harvest, of the Gospel Age. And our Lord is pleased to permit these siftings; they are necessary, apparently, that the Judas class may be entirely sifted out, and that the Peter class may be so thoroughly stirred up by the trials and difficulties and realization of their own weaknesses, and the knowledge that they would utterly fail without the Lord's sustaining grace, that these lessons may prove profitable to them, developing in them more of meekness, watchfulness, prayerfulness and trust in their All-Powerful Head. . . .

We judge that if Pilate and Herod and the Roman soldiers had some responsibility for Christ's death, the multitude who clamored, "crucify Him! His blood be upon us and our children!" had much more responsibility; that the better educated, envious Pharisees and Priests who incited the illiterate, common people, had yet a greater responsibility (Matt. 23:15-33), and that Judas, His betrayer, was the chief, the real crucifier, because of his knowledge and wilfulness.

Upon him alone, of all who had to do with His death, our Lord placed the full responsibility, the *full guilt,* when He said: "The Son of Man goeth (to death) as it is written of Him (prophetically), but woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It had been good for that man if he had not been born!" (Matt. 26:24.) Should Judas be granted eternal life, under any circumstances or after any experience, his birth could not be considered a disadvantage to himself. See also Psa. 109:6-8; John 6:70, 71; 17:12.

So, likewise, those who (with good knowledge of God's grace in Christ) sin wilfully and count the precious blood of the Covenant wherewith they were sanctified (set apart), a common thing, "Crucify Christ afresh and put Him to an open shame." And, like Judas, they often accompany this denial of His ransom-sacrifice with the words, "Hail, Master!" and a deceitful kiss. All such should be an abhorrence to every one who possesses to any degree the true, noble, Christlike spirit.

"BE NOT WISE IN YOUR OWN CONCEITS!"

Some of the dear friends feel very loath to "give poor

Judas up," and some seem to feel that their sympathy for him is an evidence that they have "more love than others." Those who come to Christ are not selected because they are the least blemished amongst men; they are oftener the more blemished; the less blemished often feel a self-complacency and satisfaction which hinders them from coming to God as repentant sinners and from realizing that they can be justified only through the imputed merit of Christ. But those who come to Christ and *hear* Him, soon learn how imperfect are their depraved conceptions, and they seek and obtain *His mind,* that it may be theirs thenceforth, as *instead of their own judgments.* "We have the mind of Christ," says the Apostle. It is our "new mind;" we are "transformed by the renewing of our minds," so as to be able to "prove (know) what is the good, acceptable and perfect will of God."—Rom. 12:2.

Those whose hearts go out so strongly to Judas (or the Judas class) seem to indicate by their questions that, however much they have submitted their judgment to God's will on some questions, they have not submitted them on this point. The reason seems to be that they deceive themselves into thinking that their sympathy with Judas is the true love which the Scriptures everywhere enjoin as the essence of Christian character. But THEY ARE DECEIVING THEMSELVES. *To love an evil thing is on a par with hating a good thing. Both are wrong; both are sinful; both are evidence that the depraved mind is not renewed, remodeled, transformed into the mind of Christ.*

The mind of the Lord, inculcated by His Word, teaches that we are to love the beautiful, pure, true, noble; we are to love (in the sense of sympathizing with) the weak, the penitent and oppressed, who are seeking for the paths of righteousness and truth; *but we are to "hate iniquity" and "every false way," and all the meanness and sin which is wilful, against light and of the Devil.*

Cease to pride yourself upon love for one of the most detestable characters known to the pages of history, of whom our Lord, who so loved (sympathized with) the world that He laid down His life for it, said, "It had been better for that man if he had never been born." Adopt God's standpoint. As the Apostles say, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked;" "He that doeth righteousness is righteous (and approved of God), but he that practices sin (knowingly, wilfully) is *of the Devil.*"—Gal. 6:7; I John 3:6,7.

For our part, we have not thought of ever becoming more loving than the Lord; we accept His definitions and seek to be conformed mentally to His standard—the image of God's dear Son. We want to love *just as* He loves and just *what* He loves, and want to *hate* what *He hates.* Of Him it is written, "Thou hast *loved righteousness and hated iniquity;* therefore, God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." (Heb. 1:9; Psa. 45:7.)

"Do not I *hate* them, O Lord, that *hate Thee?* . . . I hate them with a perfect hatred."—Psa. 139:21, 22.

We are glad that neither Satan nor Judas nor any other creature will ever be tormented to all eternity. We are glad that a full, fair opportunity for coming to a knowledge of the Lord and of the way of righteousness will be granted to every member of Adam's race; and we are glad that, on the contrary, all who rejoice not in the Truth, but rejoice in iniquity, will be utterly and everlastingly destroyed in the Second Death. We abominate Satan, who, for over six thousand years, has wrought unrighteousness and gloated over the evil and pain and sorrow which he has wrought, and who with clear knowledge of the redemptive work has for eighteen centuries opposed the Kingdom and the great salvation.—Z. '11, 403-408.

A USEFUL STONE VERSUS A STUMBLING STONE

—Matt. 16:13-26.—

"If any man come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

Peter, the Apostle, was a grand character, as this lesson well illustrates; yet, like all strong characters, he had proportionate opportunities and liabilities to misuse his strength for evil. This lesson, relating considerably to him, points a moral respecting the necessity for meekness, humility, and wise direction of those who possess strength of character.

The incidents of this lesson transpired toward the close of our Lord's ministry, probably about six months before his crucifixion. For about three years the Lord had, with his disciples, been proclaiming the Kingdom near at hand and working miracles which testified that he was Jehovah's Anointed One. Meantime, his fame had of course spread in every direction. Herod, who had beheaded John the Baptist, seems to have started the suggestion that Jesus was John risen from the dead—probably having little information respecting Jesus while he had considerable knowledge of John. Others, wishing to properly credit our Lord's wonderful works and mighty acts, claimed that he was the Elijah prophesied to precede Messiah's coming. Others thought of him as Jeremiah or some of the great prophets risen from the dead; but very few seemed to have thought of him as the Messiah, —expecting Messiah, when he would come, to be very kingly, very great, and of very high standing with the nation and the ruling class. They no doubt thought they greatly honored Jesus in crediting him with being the forerunner of the Messiah. And apparently our Lord had not particularly expressed the matter of his Messiahship during these years, leaving it rather to be recognized by those who should obtain the opening of the eyes of their understanding. He spoke of himself as the Son of God; he spoke of his relationship to the Father, and testified that his mighty works were done in the Father's name and power, but he said little, if anything, respecting his being the Messiah until now.

Now the proper time had come that the disciples should recognize definitely his office, and his question regarding what people in general said of him was merely to introduce the matter to the disciples, and give the opportunity to ask them, "Whom say ye that I am?" Then it was that Peter displayed not only the strength of his faith in the Lord, but also his own strength of character and his zeal, answering promptly, "Thou art the Christ (Hebrew, the Messiah), the Son of God—the Living." And altho we may safely assume that Peter spoke for all of the apostles, in harmony with our Lord's question, nevertheless, the fact that he was the spokesman would imply that he was the most thoroughly imbued with the sentiment that he expressed. His statement is quite comprehensive, too; not only did he recognize Jesus as the Messiah, but he recognized his divine authority and paternity; and while it is possible that Peter meant to say "the Son of the living God"—the Son of the God who is the author of all life—yet it is probable that he meant more than this. It is probable that he meant, Thou art the Messiah, the Son of God, the living One,—the one who has a right to life according to the Law, while all others, being imperfect, are under condemnation of the Law and under sentence of death.

Evidently it was a refreshment of heart to our Lord to have this full and frank statement from Peter. One, at least, of his disciples had profited by the lessons of the preceding three years, and had come to the point of full assurance of faith in him: and the others, while less expressive, were probably making progress nevertheless, and would be greatly helped and strengthened and built up by this good confession.

PETER A USEFUL STONE IN GOD'S HOUSE

Our Lord's response, "Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jona," does not so much signify, I wish or will grant a blessing upon you because of this confession, but rather, You have been blessed of God greatly in that you have been enabled to discern this great truth, hidden from so many. Flesh and blood (mankind in general) do not so believe, and could not have so taught you nor convinced you; you have been drawn of my Father in heaven, and through responding to the leadings of his providence the eyes of your understanding have been opened that you are thus able to see and appreciate this great truth.

Then followed a blessing, a prophecy of coming usefulness, partly, at least, the result of this good confession, as it was the result of a proper condition of heart:—"Thou are Peter *(petros,* a stone, a rock) and upon this rock *(petra*—this great stone or rocky mass—the great truth which you have confessed, namely, my Messiahship) will I build my Church."

The Lord did not propose to build his Church upon Peter, but upon the great truth which the Father had laid as a foundation for his plan and had revealed to Peter and which Peter had so nobly expressed. But Peter, indeed, might be one of the living stones of the spiritual temple erected upon this great foundation-fact. . . .

PETER A STUMBLING-STONE, AN ADVERSARY

Having prepared the minds of the disciples, by the foregoing declaration, that *hades,* death, would not be permitted to triumph over his Church, etc., our Lord from that time forward began gradually to break to them information respecting his own decease and his resurrection from the dead. It was then that the same noble Peter forgot himself, as we would say, and undertook to correct the Lord and to outline for him other things. He was moved to this, not merely by selfish motives of prejudice and hopes of sharing in the kingdom, and avoiding the ignominy, but doubtless also by his love for the Lord and his desire to see him honored and exalted, rather than to be set at naught and killed. But, as on another occasion this noble Apostle said things "not knowing what he said," so now he evidently did not realize the import of his language, and how, if it were followed, it would mean to our Lord the rejection of the Father's plan and the substitution therefor of a plan more agreeable to the flesh.

The text says that "Peter took him," and this we may understand to signify that Peter took him apart from the others—it was a private interview and exhortation, and no doubt Peter intended to bring in various supporting arguments; for instance, that the disciples would be discouraged with such talk, etc. However, he only "began," and did not get to finish his argument, the Master being so full of the spirit of loyalty to the Father and his plan that he could not even endure a suggestion to the contrary, and must needs hasten to repudiate such a disloyal suggestion. His answer was a severe rebuke to Peter, yet doubtless was a blessing to him so long as he lived, and probably helped him afterward to be much more modest in the matter of opposing his plan to that of the Lord.

When our Lord said, "get thee behind me, Satan," he did not mean that he considered Peter possessed by the Adversary: rather, the word Satan in the original is "adversary is called Satan, that word being used for him as a a position adverse or in opposition to another. *The* Adversary," and was properly used in respect to any person taking proper name. Our Lord turned from Peter at this time, and addressed his words so that all the apostles might hear him, that the matter might be the more impressive and all the more a valuable lesson to them: that they might all know that their Master never compromised his Father's will in any sense or degree. "Get behind me, Adversary; thou savorest (partakest) not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men"—you are viewing matters not from God's standpoint, but from the standpoint of fallible, fallen men.

So it is today, and ever has been with the Church, the body of Christ; if they are intent upon following the footsteps of the Lord ***they must expect adversaries to arise who will seek to turn them away from the path of sacrifice and duty; to make it seem too difficult, or to attract their attention to other plans or methods less costly—more in harmony with the fleshly mind.*** We should remember the Master's course and take a similar one, and point out to these, if they be friends, and in the truth ***(and such they frequently are, as was Peter),*** that their influence is being exercised in a wrong direction, against the truth, against our best interests, against the divine plan, and hence that they are not only adversaries to us, but also adversaries to the Lord. . . .

The word here rendered "offence" would more properly be translated, as in the Revised Version, "a stumbling block," or a stone of stumbling. Thus we see that it was the same Peter whose noble confession had so refreshed the Lord and blessed the disciples and himself, and who on this account was designated a stone, indicative of strong character, that was now, by reason of the same strength of character, strong-mindedness, strong will, in danger of becoming, not a stone of the Lord's Temple, but a Stumbling Stone. And should some of the Lord's people, strong in character, become stumbling stones to us, we have here our Lord's illustration of our proper course—***TO TURN FROM THEM, REFUSING TO BE STUMBLED, REFUSING TO BE LEAD AWAY FROM THE CONSECRATION WHICH WE HAVE MADE.***—Z. '00, 198-199, 202.

The Lord expects, and has a right to expect, strong characters. Wherefore the Apostle says, "BE strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. . . . Quit you like men, be strong." (Eph. 6:10; I Cor. 16:13). We should be strong in faith and strong in character, so shall we be pleasing and acceptable to God.—Z. '95, 244.

The sanctified in Christ Jesus, who are seeking to walk in His steps—shall not be stumbled, shall never fall, but shall have an abundant entrance ministered unto them into the everlasting Kingdom. The question then, is one of loyalty of heart to the Lord.—Z. '12, 80.

This thought that Satan opposes us, and that we are contending not merely with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers and wicked spirits in high positions of power (Eph. 6:12) would be appalling to us did we not, on the other hand, realize that by this same positiveness of decision for Truth and righteousness we acquire great help and and assistance by other unseen powers. From the moment of our positive resistance of temptation and positive standing up for the Lord and His cause, we become stronger in the Lord and in the power of His might. Let us remember that "greater is He that is for us than all that can be against us."—Matt. 5:11; Eph. 6:12; I John 4:4.—Z. '11, 141, 142.

REJOICING IN TRIBULATION

"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven; for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you." **Matthew 5:11, 12.**

These words of our Lord are addressed to His disciples—not merely His Apostles, who were chosen to be His special messengers, but all His followers throughout this Age. A disciple is a pupil—one who is being taught by another. All who are Jesus' disciples are to take the message of our text to themselves. "Blessed are ye," signifies that *persecution* is a favor from God. Consider it as a favor from the Father when men shall revile you—not because of the reviling, but because they shall say these things of you *falsely,* for Christ's sake.

No one would choose naturally to be persecuted or to have evil spoken against him. The Scriptures say that a good name is more to be esteemed than great riches. But if it is for Christ's sake that we suffer, we may know that the Lord will recompense us. In the Lord's arrangement there is to be a time of "evening up" for all we suffer here. Thus we lay up treasure in Heaven. All that we suffer now is storing up for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, if borne for Him.

From this standpoint we should really desire persecution. We are not to strive for it, not to endeavor to bring it upon ourselves unnecessarily; but realizing that if we lack persecution we lack one of the evidences of being true disciples of the Lord, we rejoice when in the providence of God it is our portion. Some, it is true, might be reviled for something evil or unwise that they had done. There would be no blessing in such an experience. The blessing comes when the accusation against us is false and is for the Truth's sake.

"All who will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall* suffer persecution." Hence we should investigate our lives to see whether we have this evidence that we are living godly. The Lord is the "True Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." We are the lesser lights. In letting our lights shine faithfully, we shall bring upon ourselves persecution. Let us not imagine that escape from persecution in our own case is the result of superior wisdom or tact on our part. "All who will live godly shall suffer persecution," is the promise, the assurance of Scripture. We should not court it, but should desire this evidence of our faithfulness, and should wish to be one of the "Blessed" ones, of whom the Master speaks in our text. Then let us ask ourselves, Do I have persecution for Christ's sake? We should make a prayerful examination of our hearts to see whether we are fully loyal to God, to see whether we are letting our lights shine out properly. If we lack this proof of sonship, we should inquire, What is the reason?

PERSECUTION A SURE RESULT OF FAITHFULNESS

A sister once said to the Editor, "I have no persecution, no opposition. Everything seems to be going favorably with me." She seemed troubled. We asked the sister to study her own heart to see whether or not she was as faithful as she knew how to be. Upon her reply we said, "Probably you take your persecutions with such grace that you are happy under them." The sister replied that she *would* be happy if she thought that was the case. Then we told her that the only other explanation we could think of was that the Lord was allowing her time to gain strength in order that she might bear what would come to her later. We told her to pray about it. A year or two after we again saw the sister. We recalled the circumstance, and asked her if she had yet had any persecution. She answered, "Oh, yes. I have had plenty of persecution, but I am happy and rejoicing in it!"

It is impossible to rejoice in persecution until we get the right focus on the subject. We cannot do this of ourselves, and need, therefore, to take the matter to the Lord and confer with Him. After we have had "a little talk with Jesus," our faith takes hold on Him. The Apostle Paul tells us that we are to be exceedingly glad and joyful in persecution and affliction for Christ. The Apostle Peter also declares, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you. On their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as . . . an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters; yet if any man suffer as a christian let him glorify God on this behalf."—I Peter 4:14, 15.

The Master was not surprised at the attitude of the chief priests and religious leaders of His day. He knew from the beginning that he would have their opposition and hostility, and He warned His disciples not to expect otherwise. As to the reason why there should be persecution against the Lord and those who faithfully follow in His footsteps, He himself tells us, saying, "The darkness hateth the light." Darkness stands for Satan, for sin, for everything contrary to righteousness. God is represented as the great light, "And in Him is no darkness at all." Light is healing, beneficial, health-giving.

They who are of the darkness hate those who are of the light, because the light reproves the darkness, and the darkness does not like to be reproved. Wherever righteousness is, it is a rebuke to that which is sinful, dark. Our Lord stood for the light. He represented the Truth, the Heavenly Father. And those who were in darkness were in opposition to Him in proportion to their darkness—some of these knowingly, others in more or less of ignorance. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all them which believe not." Satan has been skilful in putting darkness for light and light for darkness. . . .

PRESENT METHODS OF PERSECUTION

Persecutors have all along used the weapon of reviling, slander, saying all manner of evil falsely against those who are God's true people. As the Bible declares, "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Today slanderous charges are made and villainous, opprobrious expressions indulged in by opponents of the Truth, and this is the chief weapon, because the defamers have not the power at present to use open, personal violence. Public sentiment and law would not permit it. But the persecution is of the same brand, the same spirit—merely governed by circumstances and conditions. *Those who would say all manner of evil falsely, knowing the charges are false, are the very kind who would crucify or burn at the stake, had they the power.* Not being permitted to use personal violence by the present laws and the general sentiment, these are forced to content themselves with bringing all sorts of false charges—seeking to assassinate the reputation and destroy the influence of those who are proclaiming the Truth, the Word of God.

The right attitude of the persecuted ones is indicated in our text. Instead of feeling downcast and discouraged by these experiences, and thinking them strange, evidences that God is against us, we should conclude the very reverse. We should say to ourselves, "This is the same kind of experience that the Lord had, and that His people of the past have had." So, "Marvel not if the world (especially the religious world—the world that Hated Him) hate you. Ye know that it hated Me before it hated you," forewarned our Master. So far from being discouraged, we are to rejoice—not that any could rejoice in the persecution for its own sake, for persecution is grievous; but we are to rejoice because "great is your reward in Heaven." What we do not get here of prosperity, we shall get *there*—in the Kingdom.

The Socialists say that they intend to have some of the good things ***now***! They have not sufficient faith in the future blessings to be willing to wait. But the class addressed in our text and those who have faith in God and His promises, those who are associated with Christ, who understand that the experiences of this time are working out for them "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," and they are content to await God's time. These are rejoicing in their hearts, realizing that they are enduring for righteousness' sake, that they are on the side of God, the side of right, the side of Truth, and realizing that these afflictions are only momentary, as it were; for the present life is but a mere span compared with the eternal life, the glorious immortality, so near at hand, in which we shall receive the blessings promised—joy forever with the Lord.

"FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED"

The Master gave all His followers fair warning that they were not to expect the world to appreciate their attitude. One might well reason that if one gave up sin and adopted a righteous course, the world would esteem him; that all would see the worthiness of his character and would show him special deference. But we must not expect this under the present reign of Sin. It would be a very BROAD WAY into the Kingdom, and a great many then might take this course for the favor of man, for the prosperity which it would bring them. The Lord could never demonstrate our fitness for the Kingdom honors under such conditions.

If our Great Master was called Beelzebub, we cannot expect that the members of His Household will be treated any better. If He who was perfect was held up to scorn as the Prince of Devils, we may expect similar treatment to be meted out to His followers by those whom the Adversary has blinded; for we are less able to uphold the standard of righteousness than was He. When His enemies attempted to make His character appear vile in the sight of others, He did not retaliate. Jesus did on proper occasions, point out the wrong-doing, the wrong character, of those who were the religious leaders and teachers; but He did not do this in a retaliatory sense. On various occasions He accused them of being untrue, unholy, hypocritical; but He said nothing with a view to injuring them, but with the desire to show them their improper condition of heart, that they might profit by His instruction. He endeavored to help others to see the real condition of these blind leaders of the blind, in order to prevent them from falling into the ditch toward which their leaders were hastening.

THE MASTER'S CRUCIAL TEST

When the Scribes, the Pharisees and the Doctors of the Law tried to trump up charges against the Master and put evil constructions upon what He said, He was patient under all these trying conditions. He submitted to the treatment. It might be asked, Why did God permit His Holy Son to suffer such revilings? Why did He not smite down those who did so wickedly? The answer is that the Father wished to demonstrate the kind of character that was pleasing to Him, and He wished to test the loyalty of Jesus Himself. Would He be submissive and obedient or would He resent these affronts? Would He say, "I will have none of this! I did not come into the world to bear such indignities?" His painful experiences were thus tests of His loyalty to the Father.

Jesus knew that it was the Father's will that He should submit Himself, even unto death, and He had agreed to do this. Now the crucial test was: Would He continue loyal to the Father and carry out his purposes? If so, He would be worthy to be the Messiah, worthy to be the Divine Son of God throughout eternity. Our Lord's experiences had all been foretold in prophecy. In order to fulfill these prophecies it must be that He receive revilings, and He must accept them properly. The Apostle Peter shows that in this He was a worthy Example to all of His followers. As He who was holy, harmless, undefiled, did not seek to have the Father bring upon the revilers some punishment for their misdoings, so this is an example for us; so we should walk in His steps.

SPIRIT OF PERSECUTION STILL HERE

We realize that in our case there is none righteous, not one who is perfect. So we see that our enemies might have some cause to revile us. They might see some of our imperfections and have something that they could pick at and exaggerate. The Apostle Peter says, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as though some strang things happened unto you." As they said all manner of evil against our Lord falsely, we may be sure that they will say all manner of evil falsely against us. And as He bore it patiently, so are we to take patiently everything that comes to us, and to recognize that nothing can possibly happen to us except what the Father will foreknow and permit for our good and for His glory. Our Master left us a portion of His cup that the Father poured for Him. After the cup has all been drained, then will come the glory and the honor —but not now.

We might naturally expect under the changed conditions of the present day, that those who are loyal to God and His Truth would not be maltreated and persecuted as in Jesus' day. But we believe there is another way of viewing the matter. We believe that Jesus, if He were here in the flesh today, would be persecuted and maligned by the worldly-minded, especially in the nominal Church system. Now, instead of crucifying Him literally, or roasting Him at the stake, they would "roast" Him before the public—a more refined form of persecution—for THE SPIRIT OF PERSECUTION IS STILL HERE.

In proportion as the followers of Jesus are faithful to the teachings of the Master, in that same proportion they will be out of harmony with everything opposed to the spirit of Christ, and in that same proportion they will be misrepresented and persecuted. In Jesus' day there were plenty of people who did reverence to the Doctors of the Law who made broad their phylacteries and were very exact as to the letter of the Law, the paying of tithes, etc. Jesus did not seek honor and high position. But He appealed to the people to turn from sin, to walk in His steps, to STAND (FAST) for the Truth as against ALL unrighteousness and untruth. This appeal touches no responsive chord in the hearts of the worldly-minded.

For this reason, we say that the world has not changed, that the world is still in opposition to the Word and its spirit—particularly the religious world. It is still true, however, as in the days of our Lord in the flesh, that the common people are inclined to hear the Gospel gladly, if not blinded by the religious leaders. But today, as in Jesus' time, many are influenced by the false representations of those to whom they have been accustomed to look as their spiritual shepherds. If then the world should come to be in sympathy with us as a people, and should speak well of us, and we should become popular, we should come under the condemnation expressed in the Master's words, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you; for so did their fathers unto the FALSE prophets."

THINK IT NOT STRANGE

If, on the contrary, we find that in spite of our best endeavors we are beset by opposition, and are viewed with suspicion, if unworthy constructions are placed upon our unselfish efforts to do good and to carry to others the glorious light which has so blessed our own hearts, let us not be surprized or feel aggrieved; for undoubtedly it is for the same reason that Jesus was opposed.

The spirit of light is the spirit of Christ. The spirit of darkness is of the world. All who have sympathy for that which is evil, or have been so blinded that light appears as darkness, will oppose the light. There has been so much of selfishness in the world, and the people have been so often taken advantage of and duped, that we cannot wonder that they are slow to believe that there are any who can be actuated solely by the motive of blessing their fellows.

It will be to the interest of some to promote priestcraft, and they will, therefore, seek to break down whatever is inimical to their interests. They say, "You are opposing us." We reply that we are only holding up the light. But they feel that the light that is reaching the people is undermining their influence. We believe that this is the secret of much of the strong opposition to the Truth that is prevailing in some quarters. There is a large number, we believe, who in many respects are good men, but who are fighting the light. We may suppose that they do not realize what they are doing—that unwittingly they are holding on to the ignorance of error, in bondage to Sin and Satan. For this reason they are in antagonism to those who are lifting the veil from before the Lord's people and showing them the character of God, that He is Love. Hence the conflict which is going on. . . .

THE REBUKE OF HIS PEOPLE SOON TO VANISH

As our Master was hated *without a cause,* so let this be our experience, as far as possible. Let us see to it that the hatred, the malice, the envy and SPIRIT OF MURDER which is heaped upon us is entirely undeserved. *Let it be our earnest endeavor that our lives, as fully as we are able, shall reflect the light of the Truth, shall be as noble and upright as possible in all things; that our words and actions shall glorify the Lord whom we serve,* and be eloquent of our love for all mankind, especially for the Household of Faith. . . .

In a very little while, we believe, we shall be glorified with our Lord, if faithful. Then a new Dispensation will be inaugurated; and those who hate us now, chiefly because blinded and misled by the Adversary, will bow their hearts before us as the Anointed of the Lord, and we shall have the blessed privilege of uplifting them, of enlightening and forgiving them, of helping them to attain the perfect image and likeness of our God.

HOW FAR ARE OUR EXPERIENCES SUPERVISED?

The question might arise with some, To what extent does God supervise the experiences of His children? The Master said, "The cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I not drink it?" Then how would it be with our cup? Is God not also our Father? are not we members of Christ? Who, then, but the Father pours our cup? But we know that God is not a participator in any evil thing; how, then, has He anything to do with the evils that come to His people?

We answer, There are all manner of evil forces and influences surrounding us. These evil influences are of Satan and the fallen angels. "Our Adversary, the Devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour," and the fallen angels also go about seeking how they may assault the children of the Lord. But they can have *no power whatever* against us except as the Father shall permit it. He will permit no evil influence to touch us to our injury as New Creatures, if we keep close to Him. And He will prevent harm or injury to our persons, unless he sees it will outwork good to us, if we are rightly exercised by it.

ALL THINGS WORKING FOR OUR GOOD

We have also the opposition of the world. But Satan, the Prince of this world, succeeds in blinding the minds of men, putting error for Truth, and darkness for light, in order to make the way of righteousness and obedience to God appear foolish and undesirable and extreme. Those who have more or less of the spirit of the world bring against the Lord's children in a perfectly natural way, aside from the direct influence of the Evil One and his cohorts, a certain amount of opposition. For instance, our Lord, as the time of His death drew near, was speaking to the Apostles about the great climax of His experiences—that He would go up to Jerusalem, that men would crucify Him, etc. Then Peter said, Lord, Lord, do not allow your mind to run in this channel! You have come to earth to be the great King! Do not let the thought get into your mind that you are to be crucified! And the Lord turned to Peter and said, "Get thee behind Me, adversary!" He was the Lord's adversary for the time.

So the world often become adversaries of the children of God in their zeal for what they think the more honorable and advantageous course for us. They urge, Do not take such an extreme (NARROW) VIEW of things, and you will get along better. THIS IS OPPOSITION TO OUR CONSECRATION VOW; and when we resist their well-meant efforts, they seek to thwart us and to bring us back to their views and ideas. The ideal of the world for us as Christians would be, Do good, and work for social uplift, for the civic reform; build hospitals, establish orphanages, etc.; but do not spend so much time studying the old Bible, or they will call you an extremist or a heretic. So the world tries sympathetically to influence us. And our Father permits these influences to be brought to bear upon us for our proving. We may be sure that the Lord so supervises our experiences that nothing can come to us in any way whatsoever but what will work for our spiritual good so long as we keep ourselves in His love—so long as we wholly abide in Him. And death itself is powerless to touch us until God's time for us shall have come.

Our flesh is our constant, ever-present adversary. It tries to say, No, No! Do not carry this thing so far! *Our flesh is inclined to be in harmony with the world.* But our New Creature replies, Jesus walked the way of sacrifice and suffering—and St. Paul, St. Peter and St. John. Then the flesh suggests that *they* were *special* persons. But we know that the Bible teaches us that the same course is to be followed by all of the Lord's faithful people, and that *all* these will receive persecution. II Timothy 3:12.

All will not be crucified, nor will all be thrust in a caldron of boiling oil or be sawn asunder or beheaded. We shall probably not have any of these experiences; but we *MUST SUFFER*. So we bid our flesh be silent, and we rejoice in the experiences that we do have; for "if we suffer (with Him), we shall reign with Him." (II Timothy 2:12.) Of course we rejoice! and the *world* says that we are going *insane!*

THE PRECIOUS PROMISES OUR STRENGTH

We are to remember, dear brethren—and this is to be a parting thought with us—that nothing can by any means harm us, aside from our Father's will. We are promised that not one hair of our heads shall be hurt—figuratively. And we have the guarantee from the Lord that "all things shall work together for good to those that love God," who put *their trust* in Him. Whatever would not be a blessing to us will not be permitted. Our trials and tribulations, rightly received, are to work out for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." II Cor. 4:17, 18.

As we look back, we can see that all who have walked in the narrow way have received persecution. Whoever has been in accord with God has been out of accord with the course of this world. There were the Baptists, and then the Methodists, who in the early days had persecution because they had more light than others. The Presbyterians also for a time, because they had greater light than others, received persecution.

THE NIGHT ALMOST OVER

And we must expect the same today. Persecution will come to those who have the courage of their convictions. The Lord tells us that the anointing that we have received of Him is for the very purpose that we may show forth His praises. (1 Peter 2:9.) We must examine ourselves to see if to any extent we have kept our light under a bushel. In the 11th chapter of Hebrews, St. Paul recounts the sufferings of the Prophets and worthies of old. Some of them were stoned to death, some sawn asunder; they were killed and persecuted in a variety of ways. These godly men endured much for righteousness' sake. "And *all* who will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall suffer* persecution."

But the night is almost over. Soon the Lord will rise up. He will stretch forth His hands—His Power—and His children shall be delivered. Soon will come the glorious Reign of Messiah. Then all who will live righteously shall have peace. Altogether, dear friends, our text is very precious—one that should encourage our hearts and help to guide us on our way, and bring us comfort and rejoicing in these closing days of our pilgrimage.

"Our God is love; He loves to hear our voices;
In Christ we share the riches of His grace;
He loves to fold His arms of comfort around us;
And let us nestle in the children's place.

"He loves to answer prayer, though not it may be
In just the way that we should think the best;
But in His own prospective, perfect judgment
He gives the *blessings* and withholds the rest."

Z. '14, 291-294.

WANDERING INTO "OUTER DARKNESS"

In the Scriptures the "outer darkness," the darkness of the world, is frequently mentioned in contrast with the inner light, the light of truth, as Divinely revealed. Thus our Lord said, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear." And the Apostle reminds us that we were translated out of darkness into God's marvelous light. The world in general is represented as lying in darkness, as being unable to see the light of Truth. Thus again we are told that the light shineth in darkness, but the darkness comprehendeth it not. Some of the world are asleep, and hence see not the light, while others are very much awake to worldly aims and worldly ambitions and schemes, but thoroughly blind to the Divine purposes.

To a certain class who have certain characteristics of mind, God is pleased to reveal the light, and to guide them by that light in the right pathway. Such as see and improve the opportunity and walk in the way are called, "the children of the light," while others who go contrary are called the "children of darkness.' Addressing some of these children of the light, our Lord said, To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but to outsiders all of these things are spoken in parables and dark sayings, that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. Luke 8.10.

While it is true that this power to understand is "given" yet it is not given indiscriminately; it is given only to those of certain character. To these alone the light is profitable; to others it would be more or less injurious at the present time. We may well thank God, as Jesus did, that for the time being the Divine purposes are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed only to the "babes." For others to have the light would mean injury to themselves, if not a disordering of the Divine purposes and arrangements. As, for instance, St. Peter tells us that those who crucified the Lord did so in ignorance, in blindness, in darkness, "for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;" even though their hearts might have been no better, they could have regulated their conduct by the greater knowledge and thus the Divine purpose, that Christ should be crucified by them, the just for the unjust, would have been defeated.

In Matthew 6:22, 23, our Lord gives us a suggestion respecting the condition of heart and what it has to do with our ability to see or not to see Divine truths. He says, "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light; but if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness." And then he adds, "If the light that is in thee be (become) darkness, how great is that darkness!" Evidently our Lord is using the natural eye and the natural body as an illustration to draw our attention to the higher eyes of understanding and their power to bless and to guide and to control the interests of the body.

A single eye would seem to signify singleness of purpose, or of heart intention toward God, because in the succeeding verse our Lord calls attention to the fact that there are but two masters—good and evil, righteousness and sin, God and Satan. Those who are under the power of Satan completely are blinded; as St. Paul tells us, The god of this world hath blinded the minds of all those who believe not, lest the glorious light of Divine goodness should shine into their hearts. (2 Cor. 4:4.) The only ones who are not blinded are those who are the servants of God, and the degree of their clearness of vision depends upon the singleness of their eye, their singleness of heart, their singleness of purpose, their loyalty to the one Master, to the principles of his government, etc.

All who have seen the light of "present truth" have therefore reason to be specially congratulated on having passed from darkness to light, on having been delivered from the Kingdom of darkness to the Kingdom of God's dear Son, from the dominion of Satan as his servants to be disciples of Christ and servants of God. St. Peter speaks of our translation out of darkness into his marvellous light. St. Paul says, We are not of the night, nor of the darkness. St. John says, In him is no darkness at all. Again, Darkness is past, and the true light now shineth, but he that hateth his brother is in darkness.

THE SINGLE EYE OF LOVE

The point we are establishing is, that as our natural bodies are edified by good eyesight, so as New Creatures we have clearness of spiritual vision in proportion as we have loyalty to the Lord and the enlightening influence of his spirit of holiness, the spirit of love.

The question arises, Is it possible for any of us, after passing from darkness into the Lord's marvelous light, to again get into the dark—to go out of the light? The Scriptures answer that it is possible. They tell us that in certain instances God will FORCE people out of the light into the "outer darkness" common to the world in general; that disloyalty to the Lord and to the principles of his teaching tends in this direction.

We might suppose that those who should thus be cast into "Outer darkness," either suddenly or gradually, would be greatly distressed, but, on the contrary, we have every reason to believe that the world in "outer darkness" is not greatly distressed by its darkness, but rather, as our Lord suggests, "loves darkness rather than light," because it is in an evil condition; because it has not the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love. The inference, therefore, is plain that those who go out of the light into darkness will feel as contented as those who have never come into the light of "present truth"—who even are boastful in respect to the darkness and very unkind in their criticisms of the light—hating the light.

In the Scriptures quoted above, under the figure of a single eye, the Lord pictures the singleness of purpose and of heart which must characterize all who become his disciples indeed, or children of light. He even intimates that those who lose this singleness of heart, singleness of eye, singleness of purpose, and then go into darkness, are in some respects in a grosser darkness than are others who have never seen the light. He says, "If the light that is in thee become darkness, how great is that darkness!" Our experience fully corroborates this. Those who have once been in the light of the Lord's countenance, and in the light of the Divine Word, and who lose this, seem to be in a condition much more to be regretted than that of the world in general who have never had their eyes of understanding opened. *None others in the world seem capable of such violations of the spirit of love, the spirit of truth, the spirit of righteousness, the spirit of justice. They seem to be capable of saying and doing and thinking more mean, uncharitable, wicked things, than before they were enlightened.*

We have tried for years to see the philosophy of this fact which has been painfully manifest to us on various occasions, and we believe we have found the correct explanation of it as follows:—

THE WORLD-STANDARD VS. NO STANDARD

The natural man guides his conduct, words and thoughts considerably by the conduct and words of his fellowmen. The strongest appeal to the natural man is, What would Mr. Brown, or Mr. and Mrs. Jones, or Mr. and Mrs. Smith think of such words, or such conduct? This measuring of themselves with others of the same character and standing, and the guaging of conduct by that of others whom they respect, seem to be the only standard by which the world walks. It sees not clearly the principles of righteousness, justice, truth and love.

But when true conversion to the Lord takes place, when the eyes of understanding become opened, new standards appear before the opened eyes of understanding. The Master's word is heard, saying, "Be ye like unto your Father which is in heaven," and "Be ye followers of me," and "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me." Some see cross-eyed, endeavoring to serve two masters, and to walk according to two standards—to be pleasing to the Lord, and also to walk according to the earthly standards as formerly. But this is found to be a very unsatisfactory course; it has neither Divine approval nor the approval of worldly friends. Those of single eye, of single purpose, say within themselves to the contrary,

"To my Lord I must be true
Who bought me with his blood."

These soon learn that the world is in darkness, and that to walk with the world, and according to worldly standards, would mean to fail to progress from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge, and from glory to glory, under the leadings of the Master, who instructed us to walk in his steps. Hence these of the single eye cut loose entirely from the worldly standards which formerly were their guides, and they look to the Lord, and, so looking, have the very best of guidance, the very highest standard imaginable. Looking unto him, copying Jesus, they come more and more to appreciate the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of Divine love and justice, and seek more and more to be transformed in all their words and thoughts and doings into harmony with the glorious pattern which their single eye entitles and enables them to clearly see. How blessed is their condition! Instructed by the example of the Lord and by his word of grace and truth they are rising daily to newness of life in the character-likeness of their Redeemer, and becoming fit for the heavenly Kingdom and for the glorious resurrection change.

THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE

The Divine purpose is not only to call out the single-hearted, the single-eyed, and to instruct and guide them, but also to test and to prove them. Thus we read, The Lord your God doth prove you to know whether ye do lov the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. (Deut. 13:3.) The test of obedience is the divine law—supreme love for God and absolute justice to your neighbor—to love him as yourself. Additionally, the consecrated have the New Commandment to love one another as the Redeemer loved them—to the extent of sacrificing, laying down anything and everything on behalf of each other, for each other's welfare and assistance. If this test be faithfully endured, it means that the individual has not only reached the mark of perfect love, but has stood tests thereat and has demonstrated his worthiness of eternal life under Divine terms and conditions. But if these tests be not endured, it means the rejection of the individual from the light, and that he will go from the light, so that the things which were once light to him will appear dark, and the things of darkness will appear right, just, proper.

It is not for us to complain, therefore, of these trials and testings which the Lord declares to be necessary; *it is not for us to insist that those whom we love must be maintained in the light and ultimately be accepted to the Kingdom. It is rather for us to show our obedience to the Lord, to demonstrate our love for him with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength by acquiescing in the Divine arrangements and judgments.* The Lord is selecting the members of the Bride class. He has given us the privilege of being co-laborers with Him in this work, but merely along the lines of his instruction. With him is the decision. If they do not maintain the single eye, the singleness of heart, the singleness of purpose, loyalty to God, to the principles of righteousness, justice and love they cannot continue to be his disciples; they cannot continue in the light; they must go into "outer darkness."

If any fail to go on in the development of the spirit of love, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of God, they will surely retrograde, and the light that is in them will become darkness—great darkness. Instead of the spirit of love exemplified by our Lord, who laid down his life for us, a spirit of hatred, envy and malice will come in; a spirit of murder which, although hesitating to do outward violence and come under the ban of the law, will not hesitate to assassinate character and to say all manner of evil against those toward whom they become embittered. By such fruits ye shall know them. Such thorns do not grow on the grapevine nor on the fig tree.

The philosophy of their course is this: When they lose the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of justice and love, of kindness, and mercy, and truth, they lose the Lord's supervision, direction and control. And having previously discarded the rules and influences which control the world in general, they are without any guidance or restraint in respect to their course of life. Hence they not only act contrary to the Divine standards, but violate the principles of justice and decency, in word and conduct, that assist and guide the world in general. It is for this reason that those who once go out of the light of Present Truth can think, and say, and do, more mean and contemptible things than can the worldly who still retain helps to order and decency by having in mind what their fellows in life would think of their course, their words and conduct.

WALK AS CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT

In conclusion, then, we urge that all who have been once enlightened, and made partakers of the holy Spirit, who have tasted of the good Word of God, and the powers of the age to come—we urge these to be zealous, to maintain the standing to which they have already attained. We urge that they be conformed to the character-likeness of God's dear Son; that they be perfected in love, that they put off all these: anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife; for if any of these be retained, they will tend to blindness and "outer darkness." More than this, we urge that they put on all of these graces of the Lord's Spirit: meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love. These will strengthen and develop the character-likeness of the Redeemer which God has predestinated must be attained by every one who will be accepted as a member of the Bride of Christ. And then the Apostle suggests, If we do these things we shall never fail, but an entrance shall be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—Z. '09, 231-233.

"MIND THE SAME THINGS"

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, . . . that there are contentions among you." 1 Cor. 1:10, 11.

So accustomed have we become to differences of opinion that many of God's children have come to feel that if there is perfect unity of thought, of mind, it must surely betoken a wrong condition, a subserviency. In the words quoted above the Apostle Paul shows that he is not in agreement with any such sentiment. He is criticising such a sentiment. Doubtless there were "Independents" in the Church then, as there are today, and who set themselves up as teachers, and boast of their independent thinking, boast that they do not agree with the "Dawns" and "Towers" on certain features of Truth, and by implication give the impression that they should be the more highly thought of on account of this independence.

It is not for us to judge of their motives and intentions, but we believe they are deceived, and working more injury to the cause of the Lord than they probably are aware. The Apostle's conception of Divine Truth as above set forth was that all who are speaking and teaching should *speak and teach the same things;* and elsewhere he says that we should all *mind the same things.* He goes into the subject in considerable detail, and shows wherein the differences have been fostered, and wherein is the error. He points out that these conditions are the result of a party spirit, a sectarian spirit, one claiming to be of Paul, another of Apolos, another of Peter, etc., whereas they all should have recognized the error of such a course—all should have recognized that Christ is not divided, and that his Gospel is not discordant, but that it is one glorious, harmonious message of Divine revelation.

Are we asked how it would be possible for "many men of many minds" to view Divine Truth in exactly the same light? And are we pointed to the various creeds of Christendom which contradict each other on so many points of doctrine? Our answer is, that these divisions of sectarianism are all evidences of the truth of the Apostle's words quoted at the head of this article. The sectarian spirit has torn the Word of God to pieces. The Spirit of Christ, which would have preserved the unity of the Body, and Church, in the bonds of peace, was neglected, and a spirit of "independence" was fostered until the result is—Babylon, confusion.

The remedy is the one which we have sought to present in all of the Society's publications, namely, the ascertainment of the mind of Christ, the spirit of the truth, by the acceptance of the entire Word of God, and the bringing of every interpretation into alignment with it, and the rejection of everything found contrary to it.

The questions of the hour, which may as well be faced one time as another, are these: Have we who believe in "Present Truth" greater mental acumen and greater ability in the interpretation of the Word than all of our forefathers for eighteen centuries? Or, are we living in the glorious epoch which is designated the harvest time? And is not the Lord to receive the credit for having brought to our attention the harmonies of the Divine Word?

We believe that all who have a proper conception of "Present Truth" realize it to be indeed the Divine Plan of the Ages, and realize, too, that it is so far above and beyond the natural man's ability that it would be a miracle for him to construct such a theory—the most stupenduous miracle of which we have any knowledge. If its discernment now is not of man, nor by man, but by the Holy Spirit, then the Holy Spirit should be looked upon as the Teacher and not the human instrumentality through which the presentation has been made to the Church. And if this be accepted as a reasonable and truthful solution of the matter, is it not equally true that the "independent thinker" and the "independent teacher" is more likely by his independence to lead into darknsss than to lead into further light?

It is surely in vain that we pray in the hymn, "Be thou my teacher, Lord," if in practice we give no heed to the Lord as the Teacher, but, on the contrary, encourage great *independence* of thought, and encourage the suggestion that anybody could strike a spiritual match which would give greater light and throw the Divine Plan of the Ages into the shadowy back-ground.

Whoever believes this to be possible cannot believe that the Divine Plan is the Truth—THE TRUE PLAN OF GOD. It cannot satisfy his longings as nothing else could do, else he would not be longing for or seeking for something further, an independent and special light. Rather, he would be so over-awed with the wonderful grace of God in the light of Divine Truth, which had percolated through the blindness of his previous superstitions and given him the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, that he would be bowed down in humility and gratitude. He would fear to lift his eyes even for a moment from the beatific vision lest a single feature should be missed. *Nor could he rationally expect to find a grander one, if he has really seen and really tasted the riches of God's grace and truth, as now made manifest to the saints.*

The only explanation that at all fits or explains present conditions, and the present bright-shining of the Divine Word, is that given us by the Master himself. He assured us that at his second coming he would make himself known to those who would be at that time his true, loyal, faithful servants. He assured us that he would gird himself, become their servant, and cause them to sit down to meat, and bring forth to them from the treasuries of Divine Truth things new and old. (Luke 12:37.) This is the only explanation of the bounties that crowd the table of the Lord's faithful ones. Meat to eat indeed have they of which the world knoweth not.

The Lord is proving us to see to what extent we recognize him as the *giver* of all good; to what extent our hearts are *feeding* upon the Truth; to what extent they are being *nourished* spiritually; and to what extent in others there is merely a feverish excitement and dissatisfaction, and looking for something new. We may be sure that to those who are in this dissatisfied condition Satan will present himself as a messenger of light, offering them other food and other light—"newer and better." We may be equally sure that God will be pleased to permit him to bring such delusions upon his people to prove them, to test them.

Our Lord's parable of the wheat which fell on the highway and was devoured by the birds of the air, and on the stony ground where the earth was shallow and the sun of persecution wilted it, and on the thorny ground and was choked by the cares of this life, and on the good ground where it brought forth thirty, sixty and an hundred fold, has fulfillment in our day as well as in the past. Truth tests the character, and God desires that it should do so. We must see to it that whatever we might have been by nature, by God's grace our hearts shall be in a productive condition, and that if possible we shall be those who bring forth a hundred fold.

Only those who take heed to the Lord's Word and cultivate its spirit, and recognize the Master, and his providential leadings and care, and the feeding of the flock, will be ready to mind the same things, and be able to bring forth much fruit, and to gain the Kingdom.

Since writing the foregoing we have received inquiries from several quarters on matters closely allied to this subject and give our responses herewith:

(1) What shall the Lord's sheep do when those who have been leading them object to references to and quotations from DAWN-STUDIES in the church meetings, at which there is otherwise full liberty of expression? The specious claim is that this is "man worship, or book worship," and that God's people should use God's Book only—the Bible.

We reply that the answer which should be openly made is this: We are unable to see the difference between hearing a teacher expound orally and having his teachings in printed form read or quoted by another. If teaching by the printed page is wrong, then all teaching is wrong. If it is not unreasonable for us to hear with respect the words of one who *claims* ability to assist us in the right understanding of God's Word, it cannot be unreasonable for us to hear the words from these books which ALREADY HAVE actually and truly taught us nearly all that we do understand of God's Word. *If we ever conclude to have only the one HUMAN channel of instruction our decision will be to stick firmly to the one God has used and blessed to our enlightenment rather than to an oral teacher,* who thus shows his *opposition* to the agency God has owned, used and blessed to us. *To do otherwise would be not only unwise but DISHONORING TO THE GIVER OF ALL GOOD.*

(2) Our chosen class-leader or Elder is a clever brother, and yet we often think his expositions slightly in error—different from our own views drawn largely from our study in the light of the TOWERS and DAWN STUDIES. When we call the Elder's attention to the matter, he generally replies that it is a good while since he read the DAWN STUDIES and, that as for the TOWERS, he really is too busy to read them. What could our duty as a class be in this case?

We reply that there are two duties to be considered:

(a) The duty towards the leader or Elder would be to tell him in love and kindness that according to his own statement he is "*overcharged* with the cares of this life," and that it is your duty toward him to excuse him from the leading of the class that he may have proper time for personal study and development. (b) The duty toward the class would be to set as leader of its Berean Lessons a naturally less talented brother possessed of more time for study or more zeal for Truth. Elect him Elder and then all turn in and help him by studying well the questions for each lesson. We feel sure that the Lord will bless this courage and loyalty to the principles of his Word.

Remember that we and our forefathers have had Bibles and attempted to have Bible classes, etc., for centuries, without gaining much wisdom or light as a result. Did the light which you now enjoy come to you by "independent Bible study?" We doubt it!

What are the "DAWN-STUDIES" but the BIBLE ARRANGED TOPICALLY, with citations for every point and paragraph? Is it not probable that the Great Adversary who delights to pose as an angel of light and an upholder of the Bible is really deceiving some of our dear friends—attempting to gradually draw them away from the great light which our Lord has now provided for us all, back to the methods in vogue before the true light shone upon our pathway?—Z. '09, 233,234.

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

Any child of God should be able to tell at a glance the devil's table, from the Lord's table, especially after he has been fed at the Lord's table . . . . And any one whose soul has been satisfied with the truth, should perceive at once the deformity of error. As a musician's ear, trained to the beautiful harmonies of sound, quickly detects a discordant note, or as an artist's eye, trained to all the fine distinctions of form and color and order, quickly marks the defective work of an amateur, so the mind and heart, educated in the beautiful harmonies and the perfect and artistic order and system of the Divine Plan quickly detect the discord of error, and they need no other satisfaction and can find no higher delight; and the soul armed with this "whole armor of God" needs no other preparation to be able to withstand either the subtle or the brazen-faced incursion and attacks of error. "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to STAND against the wiles of the devil;" rest in the Lord, and be satisfied; AND FEED AT THE LORD'S TABLE ONLY, if you would have that spiritual health and vigor which is proof against all the pestilences of this evil day.—Z. '95, 275.

The words, "When the Lord would take up Elijah," suggests that Elijah had a special protected life—that it was not subject to the power of his enemies—that he was wholly under divine control. And this is true also of the antitypical Elijah class of this Gospel Age. It was true, we remember, of the great Head of this class, Jesus in the flesh. The Scribes and Pharisees made many attempts at His life before the successful one, but could not harm Him previously because "His hour was not yet come." *So with every member of His body in the flesh, every member of the Elijah class—not even a hair of their heads could fall without divine notice and permission.* These are not to esteem that any of their affairs are accidental, for being fully consecrated to the Lord and fully accepted by Him, all of their affairs, great and small, are under divine supervision—their health or sickness, their rights or privileges, their joys or sorrows.—Z. '04, 251.

For whom do we fight—for God? for Christ? No, we answer. We *fight for ourselves.* A great mistake is made on this point by many who seem to imagine that fighting the good fight of faith is doing something *for God,* which deserves His thanks and reward. The almighty God does not need that we should fight for *Him*. He is *omnipotent, abundantly* able to take care of Himself and His cause; He needs not our puny efforts. God is fighting for *us*, and assisting and encouraging us to fight the good fight of faith on *our own behalf*. It is well that this feature of the case be clearly discerned.—Z.'12, 306.

It is as truly a part of God's purposes to let some fall in this evil day, as it is to enable others to stand.—Z. '98, 76.

HE THRESHETH HIS WHEAT

When the Wheat is carried home
And the threshing time is come,
Close the door.
When the flail is lifted high,
Life the chaff I would not fly;
At His feet oh let me lie
On the floor.

All the cares that o'er me steal,
All the sorrows that I feel
Like a dart,
When my enemies prevail,
When my strength begins to fail—
'Tis the eating of the flail
On my heart.

It becomes me to be still,
Tho' I cannot all His will
Understand;
I would be the purest wheat,
Lying humbly at His feet,
Kissing oft the rod that beat,
In His hand.

By and by I shall be stored
In the garner of the Lord
Like a prize;
Thanking Him for every blow
That in sorrow laid me low,
But in beating made me grow
For the skies. —*Unknown.*
—Z. '06, 375.

Daily and hourly *we may keep ourselves in the Lord's love by obedience to the principles of righteousness* and faithfulness to our covenant and a growing love for these. We are to *rejoice* in every experience of life—its trials, difficulties, sorrows, disappointments, no less than in its pleasures, if by any or all of these means the Lord shall instruct us and give us clearer insight into our own deficiencies and a still clearer insight into that perfect law of liberty and love which He has established and to which He requires our full and loyal heart-submission.

In such faithful obedience to the truth and earnest endeavor to conform to its principles, the way and the truth grow more and more precious and our willing feet with joy are led in the paths of righteousness and peace—into life everlasting.—Z. '11, 206.

Our *faith*, is the basis of both our *strength* and our *peace*. No matter how fiercely the storms of life may assail us, we must never let go of our *anchor* and allow ourselves to drift; but always remember that "The foundation of God standeth sure;" that "His truth is our shield and buckler; that "What He has promised He is able also to perform," notwithstanding our human imperfections and frailties; and, covering these, we have the imputed righteousness of Christ, our Surety and Advocate; that "The Father himself loveth us," and that "He knoweth our frame and remembereth that we are dust," and so has compassion for the sons of His love and is very pitiful and of tender mercy. (II Tim. 2:19; Psa. 91:4; Rom. 4:21; John 16:27; Psa. 103: 14.) Indeed, "what more *could* He say than to us He hath said" to assure our faith and to steady and strengthen our hearts to patient endurance in the midst of the trials and conflicts in the NARROW WAY of sacrifice?—Z.'11, 150.

Even to those who have the right understanding of the Divine Plan of the Ages, the things which will be permitted will be very strange. We are prepared for almost anything that might be told. We are convinced of the power of these evil spirits who pretend to do these various things. In fact, we can see that while materialization would be possible to them, a representation upon the mind would be much easier; it would be easier to paint a picture upon the brain.—Z. '12, 65, 66.

According to a man's innermost sentiment, so is He. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is his real character. What is your real will? What are your real sentiments? Not, What *words* do you use? not, What are your *actions?* but, What is the *motive* underlying all these?

The New Creature is to be God-like, spiritual, eventually of the spirit nature in glory—perfect. But before it attains that perfection, the heart of the New Creature is required to prove its loyalty. Some will be overcomers in a higher sense than others, but none will be overcomers except those who are true, loyal, pure. If, therefore, we have made a consecration to God, it should be our endeavour that our hearts, our desires, our motives be perfect. The only proper attitude is to confess our imperfections, if we are wrong. God expects us to be loyal of *heart*. And that loyalty of heart should reach out and control the whole life.—Z. '13, 163.

In God's arrangement, faith has been made the very center of Christian progress—faith in the things He *has done*, faith in the things He has *promised to do*. Faith is the thing which, by God's grace, enables us to avail ourselves of the wonderful opportunities of this present time. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." But this does not mean that conditions will always be as now, or that God will forever reject those who, on account of their mental make-up, cannot now exercise faith, but it means that at the present time He will save no others than the faithful.—Z. '13, 147, 148.

. . . Through the Apostle, the exhortation is to "the assembling of *ourselves* together." It is not a sectarian spirit that the Lord and the Apostle inculcate here, when they intimate that the assemblies are not to be worldly assemblies, in which the Lord's people are to mingle, but Christian assemblies—assemblies of those who know of God's grace and who have accepted of the same by a full consecration of themselves to Him and His service. The worldly are not to be urged to come to these meetings. They are not of *you*, even as "Ye are not of the world"; and if they were attracted, either by music or other features, the spirit of the injunction would be lost, for where worldliness would abound, and a desire to please and to attract the worldly, very speedily the proper object of the meeting would be lost sight of. That proper object is explained to be "the building up of *yourselves* in the most holy faith," "edifying *one another*," "inciting *one another* to love and to good works."—Jude 20; I Thess. 5:11; Heb. 10:24.—F. 311.

Ah, then, consider thy "forerunner," Christ;
Yea, call to mind the "cloud of witnesses"
Around—those noble, faithful ones of old—
And strip thyself, my soul, of every weight;
Gird up thy loins; make straight paths for thy feet;
Breathe deeply of the Spirit's conquering power;
And run with patient, meek, enduring zeal!
Almost thou hast attained, my soul! My soul—
Shall angels, principalities, or powers,
Or height, or depth, or *other creature*, draw
Thee from the goal so near? Ah, yes, *SO NEAR*,
The glory-light streams through the parting "vail"!
Have faith, press on! One effort, grand, supreme—
And thou hast won in death Love's blood-bought crown!

—Z. '10, 350.

INTERESTING LETTERS

Dear Brother in Christ:

Greetings to all the dear saints at Portland.

We have the pleasure of sending you our love and assurance of our continued prayers for you. We are learning more and more to appreciate the **body.** We are awaiting patiently our deliverance, and praying constantly that **soon** we may **all** be gathered **Home!** We are all appreciating **very** much "Old Corn Gems" and hope it will be His will to continue them to the last.

Please greet the dear Comforters for us and give them our love, especially those dear ones who have been here. We are not unmindful of the labors of love bestowed upon us.

Yours in the bonds of love,

—F. W. S., Iowa.

Dear Brethren in Christ:

As every member of the Body of Christ is very much interested in every other member, we are writing (Sister E. and myself) to let you know how we are getting along. But words fail to express the joy and peace that have been and is ours,—a joy and peace that "passeth all understanding." We are feasting, by faith, on the wonderful prospect that is before us.

It seems a long time (March) since we have had the pleasure of meeting with any of the dear saints. Being so isolated as we are, and only the two of us, one would be somewhat lonely, especially after leaving a class of more than —— in the I. B. S. A. Although we are longing for home we are farthest from being lonely. We feel sure that the dear Lord has more than made up for our being denied the pleasure and helpfulness in meeting regularly with some of the other "Body" members. Our Heavenly Father has been so real to us and He has given us such **positive assurance** of His acceptance of us as "Sons," and feeling so much the warmth of His love, our cup of joy is overflowing. Where is the child that could be lonely where the true Father is always present and is constantly passing out good things to it? That is our position. Our loving Heavenly Father is always present with us and is constantly passing out good things to us. And this is not all for we realize and feel the presence and helpfulness of our dear Redeemer and the Body members on the other side of the veil, and also our guarding angels. (Ps. 91:11 and 12, Heb. 1:14.) Oh what joy that is ours (the feet members on this side the veil).

We have been helped very much by daily (and sometimes frequently during the day) meditating on a passage from our dear Pastor, found in Vol. 3, page 199, which reads as follows: "The Bridegroom, the grand future work, the glorious inheritance and the present work of preparation are the constant themes of their (saints) thoughts and conversation." By keeping these things in our minds the Adversary cannot get a footing for a battle. In Psychology we were taught that the mind cannot entertain two thoughts at the same time, so by keeping our minds occupied wih affairs pertaining to the Kingdom, there will not be any room for thoughts pertaining to the "world, the flesh and the Adversary." By following our Guide we CAN be "master of the situation" at all times if we **will.**

Our Heavenly Father has revealed many of His secrets to us (Psa. 25:14, Matt. 13:11) since we left Babylon the second time. What a blessed privilege to be taken into our dear Lord's confidence. It is all so grand now, what will it be when we awake in His likeness. (I Cor. 2:9.)

Yes, dear Brethren, we are surely Standing Fast. We feel in the same position as St. Paul when he wrote Rom. 8:38 and 39.

Please continue to pray for us, dear Brethren, as we pray for you and for all the dear saints.

Your Brother and Sister by His grace,

——— ——— ———, Mass.

P. S.—We so much appreciate the "Old Corn Gems" and it seems a long time between their visits. Sometimes when they are late in coming we wonder if they have been lost in the mails, but we are never disappointed. We realize that whatever the Lord permits is best for us, and that a true child of God knows no disappointment. Note Brother Russell's comments on the Manna for July 3d.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER FIFTEEN

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When the New Creature Ceases to Exist

It might be asked, how does Christ act as Advocate for the sins of the New Creature and apply his merit for their sins? We answer that all the sins that are charged to the New Creature are the earthly weaknesses and imperfection, and Christ's merit is all of an earthly kind. He has nothing to give away of a heavenly kind. The sacrifice he made was an earthly sacrifice, the merit of which has been imputed to those who come to the Father through him; so it is merely for the earthly sins, and the unwilling sins, so far as the New Creature is concerned, that his merit is applied.

If the New Creature is unfaithful in the sense of agreeing to sin then the New Creature *ceases to be*—there is no New Creature there. But the New Creature might be asleep and might be entrapped in that way, as for example: There might be a servant who is at heart loyal to his master in that he would not wish to connive with robbers that they might enter the house; but if that servant were careless with respect to the locks on the doors and a thief should break in through that carelessness, he is unfaithful, and is a transgressor to that extent. But if he had connived with the marauders and robbers and had opened the door to let them in, he would be no longer a servant; he would be no longer a member of that household, but an enemy. He would be a robber himself.

So if we as New Creatures connive at sin and make provision for the flesh and watch for opportunities to get into relationship with sinful things, the New Creature in that case has ceased to be a New Creature. He is an old creature, *merely masquerading*, and there would be no further hope for such a one. He has passed beyond hope. But if he has been careless and the robbers (we speak of these sinful propensities as robbers) have insidiously engaged him in conversation, and one is enticing him to hold open the door for conversation, while another goes around in some other way and thus breaks in, *he is responsible to the extent that he has communed at all with any of these influences.* He has no right to have anything whatever to do with sin. He has no right to have any fellowship with sinful things. He should have nothing to do with the unfruitful works of darkness, nor be in harmony with them in any sense of the word, but should turn from them as from an enemy. *We have no right to have any fellowship or sympathy with that which the master of the house has prohibited.* The Master of our house is Christ the Lord, and his will and his rule are to be respected, not only in the outward letter, of apparently trying to keep the house secure, but to the full extent of resisting and treating as enemies everything that is not in accord with him. The more firmly we get this thought fixed in our minds the greater will be the power that we shall find supporting our new wills in this resistance of sin.—Z. '10-166-167.

ALL OLD CORN GEM READERS PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:

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LOYALTY TO GOD THE TEST

In our covenant with our Lord, we have agreed to give up our earthly rights and privileges and to accept heartily, cheerfully, whatever this may imply in the way of self-sacrifice and earthly losses. Our test, therefore, as New Creatures is whether or not we will maintain this spirit of loyalty, and devotion, and sacrifice, faithfully, through all kinds of trials and testings. If so we will be copies of our dear Redeemer, and just such as the Father desires shall be associated with Him in His Kingdom of glory and the work of the future. If we fail to display our loyalty, we are failing to make our calling and election sure. Every yielding to selfish inclinations signifies a backward step, a repudiation to our covenant of sacrifice. Every victory over self, and sin, and error, signifies a step forward, a demonstration of the spirit which God will approve, a demonstration that we are of the kind who will be counted worthy to become joint-heirs with his only begotten Son, our Redeemer.

We urged therefore that every attention be given to heart-searching, heart-keeping. We reminded the friends of the words of the Apostle, "Keep yourselves in the love of God," and that we keep ourselves in God's love by keeping our hearts. We reminded them also that we ought to keep our flesh—our bodies—*under* or in subjection to the new mind. Nevertheless the Lord's testing of us will be along the line of heart devotion, and not along the line of our fleshly imperfections. He knows in advance that according to the flesh there is none righteous, no not one. It is the loyal heart that he is seeking, and our partial victories over the flesh are merely attestations to our Lord of our loving zeal, and of our desire to be all that he would have us be.—Z. '10-212.

"KEEP YOURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD."

If we know that we come into the love of God, then let us remember, as the Apostle John says, that we are to *keep* ourselves in the love of God. You say, "Are we able to keep ourselves? Did not St. John make a mistake?" No, my dear brother, he made no mistake. We must keep ourselves in the love of God. "We are not able to keep ourselves, are we?" Yes, the keeping is with *you*. God will never force your will. God is not now seeking those who need to be compelled.—Z. 1915. 212.

Ezekiel 14:9;—*And if the Prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him and will destroy him from the midst of My people Israel.*—And if any preacher—EVEN ONE OF THE TRUTH PEOPLE—shall get so wrong in heart that he is deceived in what he says (Jer. 20:7), Jehovah will "send him a strong delusion that he should believe a lie," and will be against him and will destroy him from the midst of his people.

14.10. *And they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity: the punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seeketh unto him.*—Both shall bear the same punishment for their iniquity—the preachers and the man that listens to him.—G.-436.

It is MUCH easier to ATTEST great loyalty, great faithfulness, than it is to manifest these traits when the test comes. —Z. '13-120.

Published by the Stand Fast Bible Students' under the supervision of members of a committee of seven.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER FIFTEEN

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL. Z. '18:51.

A Practical Self-Examination on Love

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your ownselves."—2 Cor. 12:5.

It seems impossible to describe *Love,* this wonderful quality without which *nothing* is acceptable in the sight of God! The Apostle does not attempt to define Love, but contents himself with giving us some of its manifestations. Those who possess a love with such characteristics are able to appreciate it, but not able otherwise to explain it. The fact is that Love, like life and light, is difficult to define; and our best endeavors to comprehend it are along the lines of *its effects.* It is *of God;* it is *god-likeness in the heart,* in the *tongue,* in the *hands,* in the *thoughts—supervising* all the human attributes and *seeking to control them.* Where Love is lacking, the results are more or less evil; where Love is present, the results differ according to the *degree* of Love, and are proportionately *good.*

In the Christian an outward manifestation of amiability, meekness, gentleness, patience, etc., is not sufficient, either in God's sight or in his own. These graces must be produced by the spirit of Love, filling and expanding within his own heart. Many of the graces of the Spirit are recognized by the unregenerate and are *imitated as marks of good breeding,* and in many cases are successfully worn as a cloak or mask, covering hearts and sentiments wholly antagonistic to the holy spirit of Love.

The measure of our appreciation of Divine Love will be the measure of our zeal in conforming our characters to the Divine pattern. A naturally rough, uncouth, depraved disposition may require a long time, after the grace of Divine Love enters the heaert, before that grave is manifest in all the thoughts and words and acts of the outward man. Others, on the contrary, of more gentle birth and cultured training, may, without the grace of God within, have many of the outward refinements. None but Him who reads the heart is competent, therefore, to judge as to who have and who have not received this grace, and of the degree of its development in their hearts; but each one may judge for himself, and each one begotten of this Holy Spirit, Love, should seek to let its light so shine out, through all the avenues of communication with his fellow-creatures, as to glorify his Father in Heaven and "show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light."—1 Pet. 2:9.

Amongst the "gifts" of early Apostolic times, prophecy, or oratory, was one highly commended. Knowledge of the mysteries of God was also highly commended, and large faith was reckoned as being amongst the chief of Christian requirements; yet the Apostle declares that if he possessed all of these in their fullest measure, and Love were absent, he would be nothing—a mere cipher—not a member of the New Creation at all, since Love is the very spirit of the begetting to the New Creature.

What a wonderful test this is! The Apostle Paul counsels, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." Let us each apply the test to himself; whether I am something or nothing in God's estimation is to be measured by my love for Him, for His brethren, for His cause, for the world in general, and even for my enemies, rather than by my knowledge, or fame, or oratory!

Yet we are not to understand that one could have a knowledge of the deep mysteries of God without having been begotten by the Holy Spirit of Love; for the deep things of God knoweth no man, but by the Spirit of God; but one might lose the spirit before losing the knowledge it brought him. In the measure of character, therefore, we are to put Love first, and to consider it the chief test of our nearness to and acceptance with the Lord.

LOVE IS THE SECRET OF TRUE POLITENESS

Having given us such a conception of the importance of Love, the Apostle proceeds to describe what it is and what it is not—how it operates and how it does not operate, or conduct itself. Let us each make a practical application of this matter to himself and inquire within.

Have I such a love, especially for the household of faith, as leads me to *suffer considerable* and *for a long time,* and yet to be *kind?* Am I patient with the weaknesses and imperfections of those who give any evidence of good intentions? Am I patient even with those who are out of the way, realizing that the great Adversary blinds the minds of the masses and remembering that this manifestation of Love was very prominent in our Lord Jesus, who was patient with His opponents?

Am I kind in my methods, seeking to guard my manner and my tones, knowing that they have much to do with every affair of life? Have I *this* mark of Love pervading my *actions* and *words* and *thoughts?* Do I *think of* and *am I considerate of others?* Do I feel and manifest kindness toward them in word, in look, in act? A Christian, above all others, should be kind, courteous, gentle *in the home, in his place of business, in the Church—everywhere.* In proportion as *perfect Love* is attained the constant effort of the heart will be to have every word and act, like the thought which prompts them, full of patience and kindness. With the child of God these qualities are *not to be mere outward adornments, they cannot be;* on the contrary, they are fruits of the Spirit—growths from or results of having come into *fellowship worth God,* having learned of Him, *received of His Spirit* of holiness, of Love.

Have I the Love that *"envieth not,"* the Love that is generous, so that I can see others prosper and *rejoice in their prosperity,* even if, for a time, my own affairs be not so prosperous? This is true generosity, the very reverse of jealousy and envy, which spring from a perverted nature. The root of envy is selfishness; *envy will not grow upon the root of Love.* Love rejoices with them that rejoice, in the prosperity of every good word and work, and in the advancement in Christian grace and in the Divine service of all who are actuated by the Divine Spirit.

Have I the Love that is humble, *that "vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up"?* the love that tends to modesty, that is not boastful, not lifted up? Have I the Love that would prompt to good deeds, not to be seen of men, but that would do the same if no one saw or knew but God only? that boasts neither of its knowledge nor of its graces, but in humility acknowledges that every good and perfect gift comes from the Father? And do I make return to Him in Love and service for every mercy? Boasting over self-esteem has led many a man not only into folly, but sometimes into gross sins in his endeavor to make good his boasts. The Spirit of the Lord is the spirit of a sound mind, which not only seeks generously to esteem others, but also soberly to estimate one's self, and not to think too highly of his character and attainments.

Have I the Love which is courteous, *"doth not behave itself unseemly?"* *Pride* is the root out of which grows much of the unseemly conduct, impoliteness, so common to those who think themselves somebody, either intellectually or financially. Politeness has been defined as Love in trifles; courtesy as Love in little things. The secret of politeness is either surface polishing or love in the heart. As Christians we are to have the heart-love which will prompt us to acts of kindness and courtesy, not only in the household of faith, but in our homes and in our dealings with the world.

Have I the Love which is unselfish, which *"seeketh not her own"* interests exclusively, which might even be willing to let some of her own rights be sacrificed in the interests of others? or have I, on the contrary, the selfishness which not only demands my own rights on every occasion, but which demands those rights regardless of the conveniences, comfort and rights of others? To have Love in this particular means that we will be on guard against taking any unjust advantage of others, and will prefer rather to *suffer* a wrong than to *do* a wrong; to suffer an injustice than to do an injustice.

LOVE BEGINS AT HOME

Nothing in this signifies that one should neglect the caring for and providing in every way for those dependent upon him by the ties of nature, in order that he may do good to others. In every sense, *"Love begins at home."*

The proper thought, as we gather it, is that men and women, possessed of the spirit of perfect Love, would not think exclusively of their own interests in any of the affairs of life. Put into exercise, *this* element of Love would have a great influence upon all the affairs of life, *inside* as well as *outside the home and family.*

Have I the Love which is good tempered, *"not easily provoked"* to anger—Love that enables me to see both sides of a question, that gives me the spirit of a sound mind, which enables me to perceive that exasperation and violent anger are not only unbecoming, but worse than that, injurious to those toward whom they may be directed, and also injurious in their effect upon my own heart and body?

There may be times when Love will need to be firm, almost to sternness and inflexibility, where principles are involved, where valuable lessons are to be inculcated; and this might come under the head of anger, using that word in a *proper sense,* in regard to a *righteous indignation, exercised for a loving purpose,* for doing good, but it should be exercised *then* only for a time. If *justly angry we should see to* it that we sin not either with our *lips or in our hearts,* in which, at no time, may we entertain any but loving and generous sentiments toward those who are our enemies, or toward those of our friends whom we would assist or instruct or correct.

To be *easily provoked* is to have a *bad temper,* fretfulness, bad humor, touchiness, quickness to take offense. This is wholly contrary to the spirit of Love; and whoever is on the Lord's side and seeking to be pleasing to Him and to attain to an overcomer's position should jealously guard himself against this general besetment of our day. To whatever extent this disposition is fostered, or willingly harbored, or not fought against, it becomes an evidence of a deficiency and imperfection of our development in the Holy Spirit of our Father, and of the *deficiency of our likeness to our Lord Jesus,* our pattern.

Very few of the evidences of a wrong spirit receive from one's self as much kindness and as many excuses for their continuance as this one. But however much natural depravity and heredity and nervous disorders may tend toward this spirit of fretfulness, taciturnity and touchiness, every heart filled with the Lord's Spirit must oppose this disposition to evil in his flesh, and must wage a good warfare against it.

It will not do to say, "It is my way," for all the "ways" of the fallen nature are bad; and it is the business of the New Creature to overcome the old nature in this as well as other works of the flesh and the Devil. In few ways can we show to our friends and households more than in this the power of the grace of Love. This grace, as it grows, should make every child of God sweet-tempered. In no way can we better show forth the praise of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light than by the exhibition of the spirit of Love in the daily affairs of life.

LOVE THINKS NO EVIL

Have I the spirit of Love which *"thinketh no evil,"* which is guileless, not suspicious of evil or looking for faults *in others,* not attributing to them evil motives? Have I the Love which seeks always to interpret the conduct of others charitably, to make all possible allowance for errors in judgment rather than to impugn the motives of the heart? Perfect Love is good intentioned itself; it prefers and, so far as possible, endeavors to view the words and conduct of others from the same standpoint. It does not *treasure up animosities* and *suspicions,* nor *manufacture a chain of circumstantial proofs* of evil intentions out of trivial affairs. *"Faults are thick* where *Love is thin"* is a very wise proverb.

But where Love passes over offenses and takes no account of them, holding no grudges, this does not mean that Love would treat evil-doers in precisely the same manner that it would treat its friends. It might be proper or even necessary to take some notice of the offenses to the extent of not manifesting the same cordiality as before, but no hatred, malice or strife should be manifested—nothing but kindness and gentleness, leaving the door of opportunity open for a full reconciliation as soon as possible, doing all that *could* be done to promote a reconciliation and evincing a willingness to forgive and forget the wrong.

"LOVE REJOICETH NOT IN INIQUITY"

Have I the Love that is sincere, that *"rejoiceth not in iniquity* (in-equity), *but rejoiceth in the Truth"?* Are the principles of right and wrong so firmly fixed in my mind, and am I so thoroughly in accord with right, and so out of harmony with the wrong, that I am grieved with evils wherever encountered and sympathize with all who fall into evil or who are beset with temptations? ***Am I so opposed to the wrong that I would not encourage it even if it brought advantage to me?*** Am I so in accord with right, with Truth, that I could not avoid rejoicing in the Truth and in its prosperity, even to the upsetting of some of my preconceived opinions, or to the disadvantage of some of my earthly interests?

Every one who is seeking to develop in his heart the Holy Spirit, perfect Love, should guard carefully this point of sincerity of motive as well as uprightness of conduct. The least suggestion of rejoicing at the fall of any person or thing that in any degree represents righteousness or goodness is to be deplored and overcome. Perfect "Love rejoiceth not in iniquity" under any circumstances or conditions and would have no sympathy but only sorrow in the fall of another even if it should mean his own advancement.

THE LOVE OF GOD, which the Apostle here describes as the spirit of the Lord's people, is a love which is far above all selfishness and IS BASED UPON FIXED PRINCIPLES WHICH SHOULD, *DAY BY DAY, BE MORE DISTINCTLY DISCERNED* AND ALWAYS *FIRMLY ADHERED TO AT ANY COST*. However profitable error might be, Love could take no part in it and could not desire the reward of evil. But it does take pleasure in the Truth—truth upon every subject, and especially in the Truth of Divine revelation, however unpopular the Truth may be; however much persecution its advocacy may involve; however much it may cost the loss of the friendship of this world and of those who are blinded by the god of this world. This spirit of Love has such an affinity for the Truth that it rejoices to share loss, persecution, distress or whatever may come against the Truth or its servants. In the Lord's estimate it is all the same whether we are ashamed of Him or ashamed of His Word; and of all such He declares that He will be ashamed when He comes to be glorified in His saints.

Have I the Love that *"beareth all things?"* that is impregnable against the assaults of evil? that resists evil, impurity, sin and everything that is contrary to Love? that is both able and willing to endure, for the cause of God, reproaches, reproofs, insults, losses, misrepresentations and even death? "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even *your faith*"—the very life and center of which faith is the Holy Spirit of Love for the Lord and for those that are His and, sympathetically, for the world. Perfect Love can bear up under all circumstances and, by God's grace, bring us off conquerors and "more than conquerors through Him that loved us."—1 John 5:4; Rom. 8:37.

LOVE IS NOT SUSPICIOUS

Have I the Love that *"believeth all things"?* that is unwilling to impute evil to another unless forced so to do by indisputable evidences? that would rather believe good than evil about everybody? that would take no pleasure in hearing evil, but would be disposed to resent it? Perfect Love is not suspicious, but is, on the contrary, disposed to be trustful. It acts on the principle that it is better, if necessary, to be deceived a hundred times than to go through life soured by a suspicious mind—far better than to accuse or suspicion even one person unjustly. This is the merciful disposition, as applied to *thoughts;* and of it the Master said, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." (Matt. 5:7.) The unmerciful, evil-thinking mind is father to unmerciful conduct toward others.

Have I the Love that *"hopeth all things,"* that perseveres under unfavorable conditions, and continues to hope for and to labor for those who need my assistance? Have I the Love that *"endureth all things,"* that continues to hope for the best in regard to all and to strive for the best, and that with perseverance? *Perfect Love is not easily discouraged.* This is the secret of Love's perseverance: having learned of God, and having become a partaker of His holiness, it *trusts in Him and hopes undismayed* for the *fulfillment of His gracious Covenant*, however dark the immediate surroundings.

This hopeful element of Love is one of the striking features in the perseverance of the saints, enabling them to endure hardness as good soldiers. Its hopeful quality hinders it from being easily offended, or easily stopped in the work of the Lord. Where others would be discouraged or put to flight, the spirit of Love gives endurance, that we may war a good warfare, and please the Captain of our salvation. *Love's hopefulness knows no despair, for its anchorage enters into that which is beyond the veil, and is firmly fastened to the Rock of Ages.*

Let us, Beloved, with all our getting, get Love—not merely in word but in deed and in truth—the Love whose roots are in the new heart, begotten in us by our Heavenly Father's Love, and exemplified in the words and deeds of our dear Redeemer. All else sought and gained will be but loss and dross unless, with all, we secure LOVE!—Z. '11, 421-424.

NOTHING is more encouraging to faith than to consider the Lord's past faithfulness to us, and his promises that thus it shall be to the end. All our interests, temporal and spiritual, are in his hands, if we are his; and "no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." "All things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called according to his purpose." How often, as the years go by, the children of God can see this! As they realize what the discipline of life, patiently and lovingly submitted to, has already wrought in them, they see, as perhaps they could not see while passing through much of it, how necessary it has beeen to the developing of character in them; and so they are thankful for the rough and thorny places, as well as for the smooth, because of the peaceable fruits of righteousness, which they have learned to prize above all else. —Z. '97, 166.

Observation and reflection teach us what the Scriptures expressly declare; namely, that the requirements of character for that high position are exacting, the way to that great exaltation narrow, difficult, and that *FEW of the many called will win the prize,* make their calling and selection sure (by full and hearty obedience of mind) and *become partakers of the divine nature.* The overcomers who will sit with Christ in his throne, as he overcame and was associated with the Father in his dominion, will be but "few," a "little Flock." Not many great, mighty or noble, according to the reckoning of this world, will be chosen; but the humble and meek, rich in faith.—1 Cor. 1:26; Jas. 2:5.—Z. '94, 117.

''THE FEET OF HIM''

It is necessary for the discipline, trial and final proving of the Church of God that they should be subjected to adverse influence; for "to him that *overcometh*" is the promise of the great reward. If we would *reign* with Christ, we must prove our worthiness to reign, *by the same tests of loyalty to God, of faith in His Word, of zeal for the truth, of patient endurance, of reproach and persecution, even unto death, and in the unwavering trust in the power and purpose of God to deliver and exalt His Church in due time.* To such faithful ones are the blessed consolations of Psalm 91, which we believe is a picture of the Church in the end of this Gospel Age—a picture of The Christ. *HEARKEN:*

"He who dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High (typified by the Holy of the Tabernacle) *shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."* We thus place ourselves under the Divine protection when, having come to a knowledge of God's willingness to accept us as His children, we gratefully accept the invitation and approach in His appointed way, through Christ our Redeemer, and consecrate ourselves fully to His service. Such may sweetly rest in the precious promises of God, all of which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. (2 Cor. 1:20.) The world does not see the overshadowing wings of Divine protection, but the faithful have a blessed secret realization of it. Praise the Lord!

"I (Christ Jesus, whom David here, as elsewhere, personifies, and who thus addresses His Body, His Church) *will say of Jehovah, He is My refuge and My fortress, My God; in Him will I trust, that He will surely deliver thee from the snare of the Fowler and from the noisome pestilence"*—from the deceptions of Satan, into which ALL those not protected shall stumble; for our Lord said that so subtle and deceptive will they be that, if it were possible, they would deceive "the very elect." But this is not possible; for those who are making their calling and election sure abide under the protection of the Almighty. Such shall be delivered, not from the destructive pestilence of physical disease, but from the moral and spiritual pestilences of destruction—from the sinful propensities of the old nature, which in unguarded moments are liable to assert their mastery and overwhelm the souls of those who are not abiding under the secret protection of the Most High; and from the spiritual pestilences of false doctrine which, with subtle sophistry, destroy the faith of the unwatchful. . . . .

"He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust; His Truth shall be thy shield and buckler." So close to His heart does Jehovah gather His loyal and faithful children that they feel the warmth of His love; and the responsive language of their hearts is, "I will abide in Thy tabernacle forever; I will trust in the covert of Thy wings; for Thou hast been a shelter for me and a strong Tower from the enemy; for Thou hast heard my vows; Thou hast given me the heritage of those that fear Thy name." (Psa. 61:4, 3, 5.) Yes, His Truth—that grand system of Truth comprised in the Divine Plan of the Ages—is an ample shield and buckler to all who in simplicity of heart receive it and prove faithful to it. It is the *armor of God,* which the Apostle urges all the faithful to put on—to appropriate, to meditate upon and to store up Truth in mind and heart—that they may be able by its use to withstand error and evil in every form presented to them in this evil day.

JEHOVAH SHALL KEEP THE FEET OF HIS SAINTS

"Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday." This is the *"night,"* the dark night of which the Prophet Isaiah spoke and to which our Lord also referred, "The morning cometh, and also the night"; "The night cometh when no man can work." (Isa. 21:12, John 9:4.) The Millennial morning comes, and just as surely the great time of trouble will immediately precede it—the night wherein no man can labor for the dissemination of Divine Truth; so great will be the "terror," the tumult and trouble and persecution of that night; the arrows "even bitter words" of the opponents of the Truth—will fly by day—at the present time, which in comparison with the dark night that is coming, is called day. The various besetments and difficulties from infidelity, Higher Criticism and other false doctrines are pictorially represented as the shooting out of arrows, as pestilences, as stumbling stones. None of these are to injure the "elect," of which Christ is the Head and the Church His Members, as specially indicated in this Psalm. The Church shall be immune, and nothing shall in any way hurt them. As the Lord said, the difficulties of this day would, if possible, deceive the very elect; but this will not be possible, for "the feet" class shall be *kept.* No; the Church need have no fear of the moral and spiritual pestilences that walk in darkness, spreading and making their victims amongst those who are ignorant of the truth, or who are unfaithful to it and are, hence, unworthy of it, and who, therefore, lack the Divine protection and are subject to the "Strong delusions" of error that subvert the faith and hope of many, just when the light of Divine Truth is shining clearest upon the faithful, as it is shining upon us today.

"A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee." Great will be the falling away from the Truth, even amongst those who, like ourselves, received it once with joy and who did for a time run well. But the Church, because of their loyalty and uncompromising faithfulness and because of the ample armor of Truth and righteousness, shall stand and not fall.

We are not to think of those who will be injured and who will fall ("A thousand at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand") as of the world, but rather as being FRIENDS OF THE CHURCH; CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE CHURCH. The world could not fall from Divine favor, for it has not been in Divine favor. The whole "world lieth in the Wicked One," and, therefore, could not be overthrown. This verse seems to apply to those who were actually begotten of the Holy Spirit; as, for instance, the tares which affect to be wheat. They never were wheat, and will not be garnered with the wheat class. Time will show that they are not of this class. So in this picture we see the fall of these in general and of the consecrated in particular. There is a distinction between *the thousand* falling at the *side* and the *ten thousand* falling at the *right hand.* We might infer that the one thousand may fall into total unbelief, and the ten thousand, the "great company," into the great time of trouble to wash their robes white and to purify themselves. They will be partakers with Babylon in her sins and have part in her great fall.—Rev. 14:18; 18:10.

None too extravagant is the prophetic declaration, "A thousand shall fall at thy side." Only the sanctified in Christ Jesus, copies of God's dear Son, will be able to stand complete in Him. These will be the very elect, and it will not be possible for them to be deceived and ensnared for God will give His messengers a charge (message) for them ("present Truth") and thus these "feet" of the Body of Christ shall be upheld that they stumble not.

"Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked," who reject the Truth or prove unfaithful to it. We know that we are already passing through the beginning of these troubles (the troubles upon the nominal church incident to its testing), and that we are escaping, while many on every hand are falling into error and infidelity.

We escape, not by being taken away from the scene of trouble, but by being supported, strengthened and kept in the very midst of it all by the Word of the Lord, our shield and buckler.

"NO EVIL SHALL BEFALL THEE"

"Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling"—no evil of the kind referred to; and any other *seeming* evils shall, under Divine providence, work together for your good.—Rom. 8:28.

God has so arranged that *only the truly consecrated will be kept from stumbling into error in this evil day.* Every day we learn to appreciate more and more the Divine favor which has anointed the eyes of our understanding, and permitted us to see the internal strength and beauty of the Divine Word and Plan. If, then, we are thus, by Divine favor, made strong in the Lord, and enabled to "STAND FAST" while thousands are falling from their faith and steadfastness, let us "rejoice with fear" (reverence). Let him who feeels strong and well supported "be not high-minded,'" but "take heed lest he fall." Humility and zeal for the Lord are the terms upon which we received the great blessing, and are also the terms upon which we may retain it to the end—until our "change" comes and establishes in glory what grace began in our weakness.

"For He shall give His angels charge concerning thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." That is, God will raise up some faithful pastors and teachers who will "watch for your souls as they must give account." True, there shall arise false teachers, perverting the Word of the Lord, and seeking by cunning sophistries to subvert your souls; but if in simplicity of heart the Lord's children require a "Thus saith the Lord" for every element of their faith, and carefully prove all things by the Word, *they will be able readily to distinguish the true from the false.* And having done so, the Apostle Paul (Heb. 10:35) counsels us to have confidence. The Lord, our Shepherd, will care for the true sheep.

The Apostle Paul assures us that the angels of God are ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto and serve those who shall be heirs of salvation, the saved ones of this Gospel age—not only the overcomers of the "little flock," but also the overcomers of the "great multitude." Our Lord Jesus sets forth practically the same thought in His declaration, "Their angels do always behold (have access to) the face of My Father." (Matt. 18:10.) The Master's words seem to imply, at least, that one or more angels have charge over the consecrated ones, the "very elect." Nothing can by any means, therefore, harm these, except as the Heavenly Father sees that the earthly injury or disadvantage would prove profitable either to the individual New Creature or to the Lord's general cause. This is in full accord with His general assurance that all things shall work together for good to those that love Him.—Rom. 8:28.

Such a use of the heavenly messengers by no means invalidates the thought that the Lord's earthly children are frequently used of Him as ministers, servants, the one to the other. Indeed, we may be assured that the invisible messengers or servants, generally, if not always, are required to act through human instrumentalities—preferably through "the very elect." Of this kind of service done by the brethren, one for the other, we have illustrations in the Harvest work, for instance—supervised by our present Lord and His heavenly hosts, yet in the main carried on by the members of His Body still in the flesh.

THE HARVEST MESSAGE GOD'S KEEPING POWER

"They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone"—*"thee"*—all the members of the Body of Christ, individually and collectively, using all their strength to protect against any stumbling-stone of false doctrine, and especially that great fundamental Rock-Doctrine of the redemption through the precious blood of Christ; that "Rock of offense and stone of stumbling" to both the houses of nominal Israel. (Isa. 8:14.) The "Feet" of the Body are its last members; the saints now living are members of "the feet of Him" (Christ), the ones who are now in danger of being stumbled, as the feet of the Jewish house of servants were in danger in the end, or harvest, of the Jewish Age.

How do such messengers *bear up the feet of Christ?* By helping them to a clear understanding of the Truth, and teaching and encouraging them by word and example how to be faithful to the Truth, and how to run so as to obtain the prize of our high-calling.

While doubtless the heavenly messengers are connected with this work, yet it is surely done through the Church in the flesh, as already intimated. The Lord has given His messengers, the leaders of His consecrated people, a "charge," a message, a word of warning, counsel, advice—an opening of the Word of Truth, an enlightening of their understanding—that they should bear up all the members of "the feet" class, all of "the very elect" in this time of serious trial, testing and stumbling, lest at any time any of this class should stumble through the peculiar trials of the present time. How manifestly this is fulfilled! The Harvest message in its various features, bearing on every phase of Truth now due, and every phase of error now brought forward, is God's keeping power by which, according to His guarantee, we know that nothing shall by any means hurt "the feet" members of the Body of Christ.

It is for us to rejoice in these blessings and favors of the Lord and to increase our faith; and we remember that even before the "House of Sons" was organized the Lord had power and exercised it in the "House of Servants" in a way that illustrates to us the abundance of that power.

Satan would like to have us walk by sight, not by faith; he would like to have us continually tempting God, and demanding some ocular demonstration of His favor and protection, instead of accepting the testimony of His Word, and relying thereupon implicitly, in faith. In the light of the unfolding of the Scriptures we see that Satan, probably unwittingly, quoted this passage of Scripture wholly out of its proper meaning and interpretation, a passage which referred, not to the literal feet of Jesus and to literal stones and to literal angels, but to the symbolic feet-members of the Body of Christ today, and to the stones of stumbling, doctrinal and otherwise, which are now permitted in the path of the faithful, and to the angels, or ministers, of Divine Truth, who would be commissioned to bear up "the feet" members with such counsels, admonitions and expositions of Scripture as would be necessary for them.

"Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the dragon thou shalt trample under feet." Thus borne up in the hands of the Lord's faithful messengers and guarded by their vigilant watchfulness, and under the constant protection of the Most High, God's trusting, faithful children shall triumph over every device of Satan either to overpower or to beguile them—whether he goes about like a roaring lion, or whether serpent-like, he stealthily lurks about to insert his venomous poison.

"Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him on high, because he hath known (appreciated) My name." On account of the love and loyalty of each individual composing "the feet" class, the heavenly Father will deliver him from the pestilence, etc., and will exalt him to joint-heirship with Christ, make him a member of the "Royal Priesthood" and a partaker of the divine nature.

"He shall call upon Me and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver ***him and honor*** *him. With*

long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation." He will make him understand His plan. As individuals they are known unto the Lord, who judges not merely by the sight of the eye and the hearing of the ear, but who discerns and judges the thoughts and intents of the heart. And, however widely they may be scattered, whether standing alone as "wheat" in the midst of tares, or in company with others, God's eye is always upon them. Dwelling in the secret place of the Most High (sanctified, wholly set apart unto God), they shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty, while the judgments of the Lord are experienced by the great religious systems that bear His name in unfaithfulness. They have no share in the judgments of Great Babylon, but are previously enlightened and called out of her.

Praise the Lord for such assurances of His loving care! *Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, praise His holy name!*"—Z. '11:437-439.

BEAR UP THE FEET

"Judge this, rather, that no man put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way." "He shall give his angels (messengers, servants) charge over thee; . . . they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone."—Rom. 14:13; Psa. 91:11, 12.

Every gathering of the saints, even of two or three, is an assembling of the members of the body of Christ. So that the entire number of saints in the world today, or in any day, represents the one body; and yet the entire body is but one, Looked at still another way, we see the head first, and the succeeding members following in order, leaving those members of Christ who are alive and remain unto the presence of the Lord to represent the last members—the feet.

It is to these that the prophet refers above: not to the literal feet of Jesus, but the feet members of his body. (Many improperly accept Satan's interpretation of this passage, notwithstanding Jesus' rejection of it.—Matt. 4:6, 7.) The prophet makes the statement that the Lord will make special provision for the help and support of the "feet" just after giving a description of the evil day which the "Feet" class will experience—the dark day, when the arrows of error will fly thick and fast; when the pestilence of Infidelity will stalk abroad; when all, except the "feet" class, shall fall—thousands on every hand. The question will no longer be, Who will fall? but "WHO SHALL BE ABLE TO STAND"? These, the real feet members, shall not fall; these shall have special help; *God will send them messengers, whom he will specially instruct* or charge that his will shall be accomplished, and the true overcomers be upheld, and neither stumble nor fall.

Blessed assurance! cause for trust and confidence, that if we abide under the protection with which he has covered us, we shall be safe and come off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him who loved us and washed us in his own precious blood. But the thought specially in mind is this: Not only are those who scatter the pestilence and shoot out the arrows of error, and cast stumbling-blocks in the way, men in the flesh, but those messengers whom God will use to bear up the "feet," and keep them from falling, are also human agents. Both classes are servants—serving some cause, either of truth or error; serving some master—the God of truth, or Satan, the father of lies and errors. No matter whose uniform we wear, his servants we are to whom we render service. If Satan can get into the service of error those who profess to serve the Lord, he is the more pleased, and the more successful in reaching others of the same class. As the Apostle advised us, so we find it in this evil day—the ministers or messengers or servants of error will appear as messengers of light, and their influence will thereby be the greater; and all not fixed upon the rock foundation of Christian hope will be sure to fall. All not protected by the armor which God's Word supplies are sure to fall pierced with the arrows of error.

Of two things then be assured: We each must serve one side or the other in this battle of the great day of God Almighty, which has to the Church a different phase from that in which it will present itself to the world. Our strife is with spiritual adversaries, a battle between truth and error on religious subjects, while there is a conflict also between right and wrong, truth and error, as relates to political and temporal affairs. On which side are you serving? Are you scattering error by words of your own, or reading matter, or in other ways doing that which will smite down and stumble your fellow pilgrims? or are you giving the more earnest heed to the special "charge" God has given us regarding the dangers and pitfalls of this day? and are you thus "bearing up" the fellow members of the body—the feet? Are you earnest in rightly dividing the word of truth? and are you careful to put before others only that which you have thoroughly examined and proved to the extent of your ability by the Word of God? Are you one of Satan's messengers, being used by him to overthrow the faith of some, and to remove "the feet" from the grand rock of faith—the ransom? or are you rendering yourselves as servants of righteousness and messengers of God, serving and blessing the feet? If the one, you are stumbling and defiling the "feet"; if the other, you are bearing up and "washing" the "feet."

True, the errors will test the armor of each, whether you shoot any of them or not; and it is also true that the "feet" shall be borne up and not dashed, whether you assist or not; but the question is none the less important to each of us, and will demonstrate our own faithfulness or unfaithfulness, our own worthiness or unworthiness to be members of the feet class of the body. . . . . The bride makes ***herself*** "ready" for the Bridegroom: each member assisting the others results in the preparation of all. Not that we could make ourselves ready of ourselves, but that we aid each other in the cultivation of those traits of character which the Lord has stipulated shall distinguish all who become his joint-heirs.—Rom. 8:29.

Judge—examine yourselves—that none of you "put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way." —Rom. 14:13.—Z. '94-103-104.

Remember that the eye of the great Refiner is upon you; and as the refiner of gold watches the metal in the crucible to see his image reflected in it, so the Lord, the great Refiner, has his eye upon you. He is watching to see how the precious metal of your character reflects his image. Or, in plain language, in every trial he watches to see what influences control our actions, whether they be influences of present advantage, or worldly policy, or personal friendship, or earthly loves—of husband, or wife, or children, or horses, or lands, or whether they be honor among men, or love of ease, or love of peace at any cost; or whether, on the other hand, we are controlled by the naked principles of truth and righteousness; and whether we will defend these principles with zeal and energy at any cost of labor or suffering, or both, and so fight the good fight of faith to the better end—even unto death.

Those who do so, reflect the Master's image. Like him they are loyal to God, loyal to the principles of truth and righteousness, brave, obedient, faithful. These are the overcomers.—Z. '96, 45.

"BE AT PEACE AMONGST YOURSELVES"

(1 Thess. 5:13.)

Because general discontent prevails in this our day, and because God's children, although not *of* the world, are *in* it, are influenced by it, therefore it becomes daily more necessary that each child of God shall be on the alert to keep his body under, to keep his tongue from murmuring, to keep his heart from discontent, to be filled with thankfulness and gratitude to God in appreciation of all his benefits toward us.

Additionally the characters being called and drawn of the Lord during this Gospel Age must all be firm of texture—strong characters. God seeketh such to be of his Son's Bride and joint-heirs. *Their firmness, positiveness, is in contrast with the supineness and indifference of others.* Their weaknesses through heredity are as great as those of others. Hence when a number of these are brought together, as in a class for Bible study, there is a great need of patient forbearance one with the other. If differences and clashes come, the damage one to another is sure to be greater than with people of less character, of less positive convictions, of less determination. Consequently these find the Apostle's words true, "Ye have need of patience."

With the Truth, therefore, to this class God proposes there shall also go the spirit of the Truth, the spirit of holiness, meekness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love; otherwise serious friction and damage would result.

If in any class of Bible Students, Studies in the Scriptures be neglected, weakness, worldliness, love of pleasures, lack of zeal in the Lord's service, etc., are sure to manifest themselves. And if Studies in the Scriptures are prosecuted but not applied to the heart and life the fruits of the Spirit will be deficient—meekness, gentleness, etc. Every item of knowledge should be used as the foundation for soil in which further graces of the Spirit will be developed for the enrichment of the character of the New Creature.

We have had occasion at times to call the attention of the classes to the fact that those chosen to be their servants, ministers, elders, are not to be recognized as their "lords," and are not to be upheld in any attempts to "lord it over God's heritage." (1 Pet. 5:3.) Now, on the other hand, we wish to call special attention to the fact that a hypercritical spirit might be engendered by the class, which might lead some of the members to take a wrong attitude. It would evidently be just as contrary to the Lord's Spirit if the class were to "lord" it over the elders. They are to be loved, to be upheld, to be appreciated; and if they have some imperfections, like other men, they are no less worthy of sympathy and forgiveness and exoneration.

In proportion as the Elders or ministers are faithful, humble, diligent, in the service of the flock, they should have the hearty co-operation of every member of the class. "Honor to whom honor is due; praise to whom praise is due."

Some of God's people, like some of the people of the world, take a hypercritical view of some trifling things, such, for instance, as parliamentary usages in connection with meetings. We are to remember that the Bible lays down no particular parliamentary usages, but gives to God's people the one broad, general law to govern each one of them in all the affairs of the Church. This Law the Master mentioned in few words, saying, "A New Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you."—John 13:34.

Let this law of love measure all of our relationships as God's people; whether we be of those chosen to be Elders or not chosen, the law of love should be used to measure our every act, our every word—yea, our very thoughts. If we can all, dear brethren, have this rule continually in mind, it will save a great deal of friction, heart-burnings and heart-achings. It will make us more like our blessed Master, better representatives of Him before each other and before the world. It will incline us to be methodical and careful as possible ourselves in all that we do and then lovingly not to expect quite as much of others until after they shall have learned the beauty of the right way by observing our course. Let us be content whatever the method adopted by the majority, if it expresses the will of the majority, however the conclusion may be reached. If we think the majority less wise than we, let us learn patience and wait, as the Lord does, until they learn the error of their course and amend it. In a word, let us each more and more seek to be peacemakers: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."—Matt. 5:9.

REST IN THE LORD

Just to let thy Father do
What he will;
Just to know that he is true,
And be still.

Just to follow, hour by hour,
As he leadeth;
Just to draw the moment's power
As it needeth.

Just to trust him: this is all!
Then the day will surely be
Peaceful, whatsoe'er befall,
Bright and blessed, calm and free.

Just to recognize its light
All-enfolding;
Just to claim its present might,
All-upholding.

Just to know it as thine own,
That no power can take away:
Is not this enough alone
For the gladness of the day?

Just to let Him take the care
Sorely pressing,
Finding all we let Him bear
Changed to blessing.

This is all! and yet the way
Marked by him who loves the best;
Secret of a happy day,
Secret of his promised rest. —Z. '93, 199

We urge all to take note of the fact that the murmurers and complainers in typical Israel were not permitted to enter into Canaan's blessings. (I Cor. 10:10.) We remind them of the Apostle's words to the effect that murmurings against the Divine arrangements are really murmurings against the Lord himself. Let us do with our might what our hands find to do, without murmuring, without complaining, without faultfinding. (Phil. 2:14.) Let us leave to God the management of his work. Let us humbly realize that if he would commit it all to our care we would be unable to manage it and would be obliged to take it back to him and to solicit his supervision of his own work.—Z. '09, 324.

FORCIBLY CAST OUT

In some respects a still greater commotion will ensue when these sealed and gathered servants, the "wheat" class, are *examined* after having been brought into some measure of the light and privileges of the present truth—when, as shown in two parables, *two classes will be FORCIBLY CAST OUT of the light* into the outer darkness of the world, thus to pass with the world through the great trouble now impending. The two classes to be thus cast out by the Lord are—first, those who have taken off the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness and who deny the precious blood and the ransom which it alone secures; and secondly, the unfaithful servants who bury their consecrated talents in earthly things instead of using them in the Master's service. No earthly power can keep such from going into the outer darknesss of error, for it is the Master's order that they shall be cast out.

Moreover, we can only expect that such will struggle vehemently against reproofs and against any words of warning, and claim that instead of going into the outer darkness of the world they are following NEW LIGHT. As a reward for your efforts to do them good and to help them, by exposing their delusions, they will hate you and say all manner of evil against you. Be not surprised at this; it is merely incidental to the sifting which *MUST* go on to the finish. Remember the Master's words further—It is needful that offenses and divisions come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh. (Matt. 18:17; Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 11:19.) Let us not by our acts or words or looks drive such from us, except in so far as faithfulness in speaking the truth boldly and in love will do it. Let the truth make the separation. Speak the truth in love, and *stand firmly* by it. It is the power of God, not only in the first separating and gathering, but it will be the power also in the second separating and casting out. "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner (manifester) of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb. 4:12.

Nor will those cast out of the light, as unworthy of it, recognize the agency by which the *Lord* will cast them out, any more than they recognized his agency in bringing them into the light. Yet he tells us that he will cast them out. They will *go out* from us because they were not of us, that it may manifest that they were not all of us. (1 John 2:19.) They go out from us because they lack full consecration and full submission to the will of God. For this cause, thus to cast them out, *the Lord will send them strong delusions*, delusive errors, that they may believe a lie; that thus all who, when they know the truth, fail to take pleasure in serving it, may be condemned and manifested as unworthy of joint-heirship with Christ, and consequently unworthy of the light which he provides only for such.—Z. '91, 2.

STRONG DELUSION

"For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be condemned (as unfit for the honors of the high calling) who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."—II Thess. 2:11, 12.

A delusion is an error which, when viewed from certain standpoints of observation, has the appearance of truth. A delusion is more or less dangerous according to the importance of the truth which it misrepresents, beclouds or falsifies; and, if followed, it leads accordingly to more or less disastrous consequences. If a merchant be deluded and misled by an apparent boom in his line of industry, the result to him may be financial disaster. If a man or woman be deluded by false ideas of life or by false appearances of character when choosing a partner for life, the result may be long years of domestic misery. And, likewise, eternal interests may be, and are, continually affected by the delusions of error on religious subjects.

When a man is deluded he verily thinks he is right. He claims to be honest in his convictions, and he is so. "There is a way that *seemeth right* unto a man; but the end thereof (where the subject of delusion is of vital interest) are the ways of death." (Pro. 16:25.) The world today is full of delusions, and of deluded people who verily think they are right, and who expect in due time to realize their delusive hopes. There are political delusions, financial delusions and religious delusions of every shade and hue; and thousands and millions of people are following them, and devoting all their time and energy to them, only to realize in the end a whirlwind of confusion, disaster and the utter wreck of all their hopes.

The questions then arise, "Who can escape these delusions so common among men? or how may we know that we are not ourselves among the number of the deluded ones." The fact is that no member of the fallen race is, of himself, proof against them. We are all, in consequence of the fall, both physically and mentally impaired; our experience is brief and varied, and our knowledge is necessarily very limited.

Though we see that financial delusions are continually misleading men and blighting their hopes of temporal advantage; and though we see that political delusions are forming various factions among men and leading them to strive for the realization of numerous delusive hopes, which, in the end, will bring only anarchy and a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation; yet those which chiefly concern the children of God are the religious delusions, or those capable of affecting their eternal interests. The saints have little to fear from financial delusions or disasters, since they are generally the poor of this world who have little to lose, but whose bread and water are sure (Isa. 33:16), and whose treasures are not laid up here, but in heaven. Nor are they specially concerned with the political delusions which we are told shall ere long lead to the great political disaster, which is even now imminent. These are important to the world, whose only concern is their temporal interests. But the questions with us are, How shall we escape the religious delusions so prevalent everywhere? and what proof have we that we are not now under such hallucinations?

These are important questions which no child of God can afford lightly to set aside. But note the words of the Apostle above quoted, which seem to imply *that God is desirous that some should be snared,* and to the very intent that they might be condemned—"God will send (permit to come upon) them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be condemned."

Who are these whom God thus *desires* to be snared and condemned? Paul answers, They are those who believe not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. They are *not* those who never heard the truth, but those who, having once heard and understood it, turned from it, rejected it and had pleasure in unrighteousness—not necessarily in gross unrighteousness, such as crime, but in some measure of unrighteousness; *often a desire for a little more liberty of self-will instead of close conformity to the divine will, and consequently a preference for the error which would grant such liberty and silence the promptings of conscience and the* *voice of truth.* Such prefer the error to the truth. Those who receive not the truth in the love of it are not worthy of it, and they, therefore, must go away from it into the outer darkness that envelops the world. To these error comes in its most deceitful forms, and they quickly fall a prey to the delusion.

With the Psalmist, therefore, we may well inquire, "Who," then, "shall be able to *STAND?*—who shall ascend into the hill (kingdom) of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?" Now mark the answer: "He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." (Psa. 24:3-5.) Here is the class among whom the delusions of error can make no headway. These have a standpoint of observation from which every error appears in its true colors, and every truth in its proper light.

Mark the particular features of this class: They have *"clean hands."* Their work for the Lord may be very imperfect; they may tell the story of his love and grave in a very halting, awkward manner; they may minister to the temporal or the spiritual necessities of the saints, or others, from a very frugal and plain store of their own; but their work will be *clean;* their story will be free from self-emulation and human glorying, and their works will be free from both ostentation and parade. What they do will be done with simplicity and meekness, as unto the Lord, and not for the praise of men.

They have *"pure hearts:"* Under divine inspection, their motives are seen to be pure. Their whole purpose and endeavor is to glorify God and to bless their fellow-men, especially the household of faith. They *have not lifted up their soul unto vanity.* They have no vain worldly ambitions, either secretly or openly cherished and ministered to behind the outward profession of entire consecration to God—no ambition to be great, or good, or wise in the eyes of men, nor to grasp the fleeting earthly treasures once consecrated to God. Nor have they *"sworn deceitfully"*. They have not made a covenant with God of entire consecration to his service, with a secret determination to keep back part of the price; nor have they since making the covenant repudiated its obligations.

The whole course of this class is one of sincerity and truth. Their character is that of meekness and faith; they love righteousnesss and desire to be molded and fashioned after the principles of righteousness; and they correspondingly hate wickedness and every evil way. With a realization of their own short-comings from the standard of perfection, they put no confidence in the flesh, but humbly and implicitly submit their will and judgment to the will and plan of God. *So they have no schemes or plans of their own, but are fully devoted to the accomplishment of God's plan, in God's own way and time, having full faith in his sure word of prophecy and promise.*

Those who have such a spirit come reverently to the Word of God to learn God's will and way, and with a desire to walk accordingly; and here they receive the divinely-provided armor of God, which will protect all who carefully put it on from all the fiery darts of the enemy. Without this complete armor, no child of God is safe in this evil day. "Wherefore," says the Apostle, "take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to STAND."—Eph. 6:13.

The evil day here referred to is this Day of the Lord, in which we are now living, wherein every man's work shall be tried, so as by fire. These are the "perilous times" of which the Apostle forewarned the Church—times peculiarly perilous to Christian faith, because of the many subtle and delusive forms of error now springing up to intercept the progress of the truth. But God's provision for his saints is equal to the emergency of the perilous hour. Never before this "evil day" was it possible for the saints to put on the whole armor of God; and never before was it needed.

For some years past the Lord has been handing us this armor, piece by piece, and has been telling us to put it on and wear it that we might become accustomed to it and feel at ease and at home in it, because the time was shortly coming when it would be impossible to stand without it.

Some —*A FEW*—have been heeding the counsel. Carefully they have buckled on every part of the armor as fast as they received it, and in consequence, today they stand completely clothed with the truth. Their loins are girt about with it; their feet are shod with it; and it covers their head (their intellectual faculties) as a helmet of salvation (salvation from the snares and delusions of error). Then they have on the breastplate of righteousness—a righteous character, which the truth has developed in them; and in their hands they bear the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God, which they are now able to handle with ease and vigor in defense of the doctrines of Christ; while their ample shield of faith is an able defense against all the fiery darts of the enemy, so that the flying arrows do not even jar the armor or for a moment stun the inner man.

Praise God for such an armor! Brother, have you put it on? Do not rest satisfied with the idea that you can get along as well as your fathers did with only a part of it. *The time is coming, yea and NOW IS, when you must have it complete, or you will surely fall.* The portions of the armor presented to the saints of the past were sufficient for their day and trial; but a greater trial of faith in this "evil day" necessitates a more complete defense.

Do not say to the Lord, "Well, I have the breastplate and the shield; no, thank you, I think I shall not need the helmet;" or, "I think I can get along without the sword." I tell you, you need them all; make haste and put them on without delay. Some of you should have had them on long ago, and should be able to help others don them now. MANY are already falling, and sadly MANY are feeling their lack of the helmet. Some with mere curiosity-interest have spent much valuable time in looking at the various parts of the armor as presented to them for the past few years, instead of earnestly buckling them on and proving them: and they have become so used to merely looking at the beautiful pieces of the armor that they expect the process of bringing forward new pieces to continue forever. Let such wake up to the fact that the armor is already complete and that no more can be added to it. That is to say, the plan of God is now rounded out to completeness and no more can be added to it, because anything more would be a superfluity. The Lord has graciously shown us its entire outline, as well as the manner in which the various parts of it work together. Look at your hand: it has four finger and a thumb. You do not say, "Well, perhaps another thumb or finger will appear by and by." You know there will be no such thing. That hand is complete and another member added to it would be superfluous. (Beware of NEW LIGHT.)

Just so those who have come to view the full completeness of God's plan, as now unfolded to us, know that nothing more could be added to it. It is gloriously complete and worthy indeed of its great Author. But, while the outlining, the general harmony and the working together of the various parts are all clear to us now, we yet have room for profound thought and study of it, and probably will still have even after we are glorified. Some make a great mistake in continually putting on and taking off various proffered armors. There is but one armor that will be of any use or protection to us, and that is that which is stamped with the scarlet stamp of the precious blood of Christ. Every piece of this divine armor is so stamped, and it all fits together. If you think to change your helmet of salvation for some other helmet, you will very soon want another breastplate to match it. And you will want another sword; for this sword will not match with any other helmet. And this shield of faith will not match with any other armor. Do not allow your head to grow too big for the helmet which the Lord has provided, and then go around hunting a new helmet to fit your swelled and wrong ideas. If the helmet supplied in God's Word will not fit you, do not fancy that the increase is real wisdom, and try to stretch the old one or to get a new helmet; but freely apply the liniment of humility and reduce it till the helmet does fit.

Put on the whole armor of God. And make sure that you accept no spurious brand. Every piece of the genuine is stamped with a cross and the words—"To be worn only by the redeemed." Put on piece by piece, quickly; buckle it on securely; and having done all, STAND. The position thus suggested implies an attack: the attack will surely come, and indeed has already come to many. Are you ready now to do good service as a valiant soldier of the cross of Christ? Stand! do not run away; stand your ground and battle for the truth, (STAND FAST).

As we have already observed, *it is as truly a part of God's purpose to let some fall in this evil day, as it is to enable others to stand.* He therefore permits the strong delusion to take possession of all who have pleasure in unrighteousness, and who therefore do not believe the truth. Such are unworthy of the truth, and sooner or later every such a one MUST FALL. All such are condemned as unworthy of membership in Christ, the vine; and as the time for the exaltation of the Church draws nearer and nearer, the testing may be expected to increase until all the unworthy ones are weeded out. He will gather out of his Kingdom all that offend (those who put off the wedding garment of Christ's imputed righteousness, etc.), and all that do iniquity (those who practice sin). And then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

If, then, we would escape the delusions of this evil day, let us see to it that we are in deed and in truth lovers of righteousness; let us receive the truth in meekness, hold it with humility and thankfulnss, and serve it with energy and zeal.—Z. '91, 53-56.

CHARACTER---LIKENESS TO THE LORD

"I pray for them . . . that they may be one, ... that they may be made perfect in one, . . . that the world may know that Thou hast . . . . loved them as Thou hast loved Me."—John 17:9, 20-23.

These words, we remember, were uttered by our Lord on the night of His betrayal, supposedly while on the way from the "upper room" where the Memorial was observed to the Garden of Gethsemane. The ones He evidently prayed for were the Twelve Apostles, or rather the eleven, by this time; for in conjunction He says, "I have lost none of them, save the son of perdition." But the context shows that His prayer includes His faithful followers all the way down the Age. He says, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for all those who shall believe on Me through their word." He prayed that His followers might be one, even as He and His Father were one—the same kind of oneness, a oneness of mind.....

TWO CAUSES OF DISSENSION

A man or woman is merely what his will is and what that will can make out of the body and its circumstances. And so at the very beginning of our discipleship, the first thing is to see that we are dead as respects our will, and alive toward the Lord Jesus Christ. All who do this He calls New Creatures. He grants them the Holy Spirit, that the new mind, the new will, may be theirs. In proportion as they obtained the new mind, the new will, in that same proportion will the oneness with one another exist.

That which causes dissension amongst the Lord's people is either a lack of loyalty or a lack of knowledge. If it is a lack of loyalty, they will gradually drift away. *The Lord does not choose to force any of His family.* He is choosing such as worship Him in spirit and in truth, such as are in every respect loyal. He has set aside for the purpose of selecting this class the entire Gospel Age. This work of selecting has been in progress for nearly nineteen centuries. And this company will be a Little Flock. They will, evidently, be a very select class. They are required to walk by faith, not by sight.

Not many have the loyalty to God and to righteousness to walk that way and to count the world as loss and dross—as nothing, with all its projects. *As the disloyal ones leave the ranks, more and more the loyal ones will find themselves drawn together, and more and more of oneness will be found among those who are faithful.* This would necessarily be true in every time and in every country. All who are thoroughly loyal would desire to do the Father's will, desire to lay down their lives in the Father's service. And this desire would make the *ONE.*

FRICTION MINIMIZED WITH MATURITY

The Lord speaks of their being perfected in one. As each individual member makes progress, he becomes more worthy to fill the place or use the opportunity provided for him. And thus the Body becomes more efficacious. But the thought that Our Lord here expresses is rather that of *completeness.* He is referring to the end of the Age, when the work will be completed, perfected, when they will all be one. But the grand consummation will be effected by something which the Lord will Himself do. We find that, necessarily, because of the differences of our flesh, we cannot in everything see exactly alike. Now we can only see more or less obscurely.

At present we cannot see fully and completely. Consequently there will always be more or less friction, even amongst those who are fully consecrated to do the Father's will. This friction should become minimized, as we become mature. But we cannot see eye to eye until the glorious consummation, when we shall have experienced the resurrection change, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." We are to have our trial in these imperfect bodies. And those who show their loyalty in fighting against the world, the flesh and the Adversary, TO THE END, will be joint-heirs with Christ, sharers in His Kingdom, executors of the Divine Program for the blessing of the world of mankind.

AN ASTOUNDING STATEMENT

At the *Epiphania,* or bright shining, of the Lord's manifestation, God will have completed His present work of directing the Church, and the world will be informed that they are under a different dispensation. When the world shall have come to understand the matter fully they will know the truth of our Lord's words, in His last prayer with His disciples, that the Father loves the Church as He loves the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a very astounding statement. It shows that there is nothing selfish in our Lord. He did not say, "They will always be inferior to Me. They will never have the glory that I shall have."

On the contrary, the Lord Jesus knows that the Heavenly Father will exercise His Love along the lines of principle, character. And all who will be members of the same glorious company must have the same glorious character that our Lord had; that is to say, they must be LOYAL TO THE CORE. They must have demonstrated that they loved righteousness and hated iniquity. We read, "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." (Hebrews 1:9.) So He was anointed to be the Head of the Church class. But the Church class are declared in this Scripture to be His associates—not of inferiority, but of common fellowship, being on one plane. And the world will then know that the Father loved the Church as He loved Jesus. We understand that the Church will be on the same *plane* with her Lord Jesus. Nevertheless, we are to keep in mind that God "made Him to be Head over all—God blessed forever!" The Church will never be on an equality of position with Christ.

This is very wonderful to us, that our Heavenly Father should love us as He loved Christ, that the Lord would love the jewel, in the mire or wherever it might be found! The Lord Jesus has been selecting these characters out of the mire of human sin. And those who prove to be of the "more than conqueror" class—loyal as the Lord Jesus was loyal—the Father will love as He loved the Lord Jesus, and will glorify them with His Son.

" 'When thou passest through the waters,
I will be with thee!'
Sure and sweet and all-sufficient
Shall His presence be.
All God's billows *overflowed Him*
In th' great Atoning Day;
Now He only *leads thee through them*—
With thee all the way."

Z. '13-359-360.

DECORUM IN THE HOUSE OF GOD

"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the House of God, and be more ready to hear, then to give the sacrifice of fools, for they consider not that they do evil."—Ecclesiastes 5:1.

The wise man was undoubtedly not talking about literal feet or literal steps, but giving some wise counsel, which his hearers might appropriate, just as we do. They understood him to mean that they must be circumspect in their daily lives.

"Keep thy foot." Notice where you are going. Do not go to the House of God as you would go to the market place or to some place of amusement. Go as to the place where God will meet with His people. The wise man goes on to assume what would be heard in the House of God. Be not ready *"to give the sacrifice of fools," he says.* This would seem to refer to laughter, levity, foolish talk and jesting

This Scripture is one which may very properly be taken to heart by all of God's people at the present time. Reverence is very becoming. We have lost the fear that God will cast us into eternal torment. We know our Heavenly Father better than to suppose that He would have any such evil intention toward any of His creatures. But we should not go to the House of God as we would go to the market-place. Many of the Lord's people do not appreciate the fact that decorum is *necessary* in every place where God is worshipped.

It is for us to realize that we have God in the Church today in a sense that He never was in the typical temple. Wherever there is a meeting of the members of the Church the Lord has declared that He will be there. The living stones constituting the Temple of God should be as fully reverenced as temples made of literal stones.

Whether we meet in a parlor or in a church or in an opera house, the fact that God's people are there makes that building, whatever it may be, a holy place. Therefore whoever approaches it should do so with a watchfulness of his feet. When he arrives, he should be appreciative of the place where he is, and should be ready to "hear"—listen—not full of mirth. All conversation should be of a kind that would edify—build up—along spiritual lines. If we cannot talk along such lines, it would be better for us to hear the discourse, join in the singing, and then withdraw.

Whatever conversation be carried on, it should be with reverence, not merely for the place, but for the occasion. There should be no turning about and saying, "Here comes Brother So-and-So, Sister So-and-So. We shall hear them sing." Such conduct is very improper.

We do not know any lesson the Lord's people need to learn more than that of *reverence*. The Lord will not *call* any one devoid of reverence, and He wants that quality to *grow strong*. But when *fear* is banished, the tendency is to *less reverence*. Special care in this respect is to be observed when we go to the House of God, or to any place where Divine service is to be held.

CONSIDERATION OF RIGHTS OF OTHERS

Not only should we watch our *feet* in going to the House of God, but we should watch what we take with us. We should see that we go there clean. We should also see that we do not take children who are not properly trained. Thus we shall not be in danger of annoying others.

There may be occasions when children may be left alone at home. When this is impossible, it would be better for the parents to take turns in coming to the meetings. No one has a right to take children to the meeting, when their presence would be detrimental to the spiritual interests of others. We believe, however, that a way could be devised whereby the child could be left at home until of such an age as not to disturb the Class. The majority of parents become so accustomed to the ways of their children that they do not realize that others are being annoyed—when probably every motion of the child is disturbing others. The others have their own trials to tax their patience without additional ones from us.

PUNCTUALITY A MARK OF CHARACTER

It would seem that some need to watch, not only their feet, but also their watches. To come into the meeting late is out of harmony with the principles of both justice and love. All who attend ought, in justice to others, to see that they arrive in time. They ought so to arrange their affairs that they can be at the meeting promptly at the hour appointed.

Doubtless the Lord would view our efforts to be punctual and not to annoy others as marks of Christian character-development, which would have His approval, and which would help to prepare us for the Kingdom. He who is indifferent to the rights of others manifests that he is lacking in the spirit of love, the spirit of Christ. And ***WHOEVER HAS NOT THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST, WELL DEVELOPED, WILL NOT HAVE A PLACE IN THE KINGDOM.***

Hence these matters—unruly children, tardiness at meeting, etc.—will have to do with our fitness for a place in the Kingdom. By this we do not mean that we are being judged according to our work, or that we have any right to judge others according to their work. The Lord said, "Judge not." We should show that our *endeavors to do the Lord's will* are equal to the *desires of our hearts*. If we exercise determination in trying to live up to these, we shall be glad when we experience our change in the Resurrection.—Z. '15, 360-361.

THE POWER OF FAITH

"This is the victory (the conquering power) that overcometh the world, even our faith."—I John 5:4.

Blessed are the overcomers! "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."—Rev. 3:21.

What a reward is this which is held out as an incentive and inspiration to urge us on to noble and herioc effort! to reign with Christ to be his bride and joint-heir, his beloved and confidential companion through all eternity, and to be partakers of his divine nature and glory. These promises are freighted with an "exceeeding and eternal weight of glory," which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard; neither hath it entered into the heart of man; but God hath revealed it unto us (brought it within the range of our appreciation) by his spirit." The words sound hollow and meaningless to those who have no appreciation of spiritual things, but to the consecrated children of God who are faithfully striving to meet the conditions upon which the fulfillment depends, and who have therefore a good hope, they are exceedingly precious, and fill their hearts with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

But between the present time and the realization of the promises there lies the necessity of *overcoming*. The word is strongly suggestive of a great conflict, and calls to mind also the Apostle Paul's expressions—*"Fight* the *good fight* of faith;" *"Endure hardness* as a good *soldier* of Christ;" "Watch ye, STAND FAST in the faith, *quit you like men, be strong*." To overcome requires energy, force of character, perseverance and steadfast, patient endurance to the very end of the present life.

In the above text the Apostle John points to the only power which can sufficiently energize our whole being and nerve to patient endurance of tribulation, even to the end. That conquering power is *faith*. "Now," says the Apostle Paul, "faith is a basis of things hoped for, a conviction of things unseen." Faith is not merely belief or knowledge, but is knowledge applied, assimilated, appropriated—made *a part of our habit of thought, a basis for our actions and a spur to all our energies*. Such a faith is the overcoming power which all must have who would run successfully the race for the prize of our high calling, and be overcomers.

What is it that is to be overcome? John briefly comprehends it all in the expression, *"the world."* Then the whole world is against us in this battle. Yes, its popular methods, its ambitions, ideas, hopes and aims are all at variance with the elect Church of God, who are not of this world, even as Christ is not of this world. The world is taking its own course, ignoring God, leaning to its own understanding and pursuing its own way. Consequently, *our course is in direct opposition to that of the world*, and we must pull hard against the current of the world's spirit which is deeply inwrought in our old nature, as well as surrounding us on every side. Yes, it is a hard pull; and we need all the inspiration and energy that faith can impart to accomplish it.

It is important, too, to see that our faith is a correct faith; for if the faith be an erroneous one, inspiring false and delusive hopes built upon sandy foundations, the stronger this impelling power becomes, the more surely and quickly will it drive its deluded victim to shipwreck upon the rocks. Hence the importance of a correct faith.

It was because of this importance of faith, and of recognition of it as the motive power, either for good or for evil, that the Apostle Paul was so solicitous for the continuance of his converts in the faith. (See 1 Thes. 3:2, 5, 6, 7, 10.) He urged all to examine and prove themselves, whether they were in the faith, grounded and settled, and not movd away from the hope of the gospel, but rooted and built up in Christ and *established* in the faith; and to beware lest any man spoil them through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. (Col. 1:23; 2:7, 8.) He was deeply solicitous, too, that the faith of the Church should not stand in the wisdom (the vain philosophies) of men, but in the power of God. And, therefore, in his preaching, he did not launch out into foolish speculations or follow his own or any other men's reasonings, and so pander to the popular craving for something new; but he confined himself to the expounding of the sacred Scriptures and to exhortations, inspired, as they were, by the revelations made to himself—a prophet, as well as an apostle. —1 Cor. 2:4, 13; 2 Cor. 12:17; Gal. 1:11, 12; 2:2; 2 Pet. 3:15, 16.

Let us see, then, that we have the faith of Christ—the faith well founded in the Word of God, a faith examined and proved, deeply rooted in the heart as well as in the head, and therefore *established* as the motive power of life. Such a faith is not nervously looking about for something new, and always probing the vain philosophies of men to see how skillfully they can withstand the Word of the Lord; for those who do so show plainly that their faith is not of sufficient influence to be the moving power in them, impelling them onward to full and complete victory over the world.

Faith, to be a conquering power in us, must go deeper than the head; it must go into the heart, and thus permeate and energize the whole being, bringing not only the outward conduct but every thought into subjection to Christ. Then indeed will faith impel to action, to works which clearly manifest it; for "faith without works is dead." *A mere intellectual assent to the truth of God, which does not lead to activity in his service, is not faith*, and can never overcome the world nor secure the prize of our high calling. But this is the conquering power that overcometh the world, even our faith. Let us examine ourselves and see that we have it pure and simple, and deeply inwrought in the fibre of our character, and that as an energizing principle it is moving us to faithful and persevering activity. Let it be the governor and inspiration of our lives—a living faith which purges and purifies and strengthens to diligence and patience to the end of the narrow way to life.—Z. '94, 328-330.

Nor need we be surprised at the exceedingly small number who now diligently harken and obediently follow the Shepherd's voice; for the Lord forewarned us it would be only a little flock, saying, "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." It is a choice flock the Lord is selecting now—a flock that needs no driving nor coaxing, but who joyfully run in the right ways of the Lord; whose delight is in the law of the Lord and who meditate in it day and night. The Good Shepherd does not propose to drive any sheep into his Kingdom; and he desires for the high office to which he is calling them in this age only such as need no driving, and who gladly follow him through evil and through good report. "And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth *before* them (to lead, and not behind them to drive), and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice."

Of the sheep of this flock the Master says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. . . . . and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My father, which gave them to me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John 10:27-29.) How blessed is the assurance of heavenly guidance and protection now to all the sheep of this flock, *the truly consecrated and obedient.*—Z. '94, 133.

KERNELS KERNELS KERNELS

To walk righteously means to walk contrary to the course of this present evil world. It means to take the unpopular side of the questions of the day in nearly every case, and thus to be misunderstood and misrepresented and have our names cast out as evil; in a word, it means to suffer for righteousness' sake.

To speak uprightly is to go a step further than to walk righteously; it implies not only personal effort to withstand evil and error in their effects upon one's own character, but also the fortitude to withstand error with bold and fearless presentations of the truth, regardless of the cost of such faithfulness, which we are assured not only by the Word of God, but by observation and experience as well, will be persecution in some or possibly in many forms. Such a course of righteousness in "this present evil world," when the powers of darkness are in the ascendancy, inevitably leads to social ostracism and hatred, in proportion to the zeal for God that is manifested, and persecution in some form is sure to follow. But those of the class here described cannot be *bribed* by any of these considerations.—Z. '95, 230, 231.

Having faith, we need no carnal weapons, and no armor of human invention is of any service to us; but trained and practical faith can work wonders as great as did David's sling and stone. The sling and stone were not an untried weapon with David. He was in constant practice with them, and thus he had gained skill and confidence in their use. So the Christian must practice dependence upon God continually in all the small affairs of life, and then when the giant trials come his practised faith will be abundantly able to meet and overcome them. And the more severe the trial, the more glorious the victory of faith and the greater the strength of character derived from its exercise.—Z. '95, 278, 279.

God's gift of life eternal is precious to all his people, and a firm grasp of it by the hand of faith is quite essential to a well balanced and consistent life. Only those who have "*laid hold* on eternal life," by acceptance of Christ and consecration to his service, are able to properly and profitably combat the tempests of life now raging.—Z. '95, 238.

Let us, therefore, not make either the mistake of attempting to fight without the armor, nor the equally serious mistake of putting on the armor and neglecting to fight.—Z. '98, 159.

"*Cleave to that which is good.*" The thought is, adhere to, be cemented to, that which is good. There is a constant tendency not only from our own fallen natures, but also from the world, and the devil, to separate from that which is good and pure and noble. And we must resolutely determine, that at all hazards and for all time, by the Lord's grace, we will adhere to him—the truth, the way, the life.—Z. '97, 264.

These, whose hearts are *fully consecrated* and *loyal* to the Lord, are "the pure in heart," whose privilege it is to see God.—Z. '94, 374, 375.

Like Gideon's band, only the few who prove loyal and strong and true to the end will share with Christ the honor of bringing forth judgment unto victory by the Millennial reign of righteousness. And let all who value the prize of their high-calling beware of all the snares and temptations of this evil day. Do not aspire to be some great one now: be contented to wait for the glory that is to be revealed in us, remembering that he that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be abased. Surely all who have a true faith can afford to wait and patiently bear the the cross, especially seeing that the time is short—oh, so short.—Z. '94, 169.

In this eventful period everything that can be shaken will be shaken; for only the unshakable principles of truth and righteousness can endure and be worthy of a place in the Kingdom of God. And every one called to share in that Kingdom must be a lover of and follower after righteousness and truth. *All others will be shaken out of the company called to share the honors of the Kingdom.* The many snares and delusions of this evil day are accomplishing this very work: they are shaking out all the unstable as well as the false and faithless ones; and *in the end only the true will remain.*

Seeing then that all these present things shall so shortly be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? "Be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace."—2 Pet. 3:11, 14.—Z. '96, 8.

STAND

When you can do no more, *stand.* "Having done all things, *stand.*" But beware how and where you stand. "Stand fast in the faith." Stand on covenant ground. Stand with face to foe. Stand watching, waiting, VICTORIOUS. "Stand still and see the salvation of God. Stand not in your own caprice, or by human order. Even though Red Sea barriers lie across your way it may be the will of God that you go forward without a halt. It is easier to march than to stand. It is easier to rush forward to the charge than to stand still and receive the fiery assault. The good soldier must be ready for both. They serve well who march and fight for their king. But "they also serve who only stand and wait." Patience and fortitude are precious in the sight of God, and "to obey is better than sacrifice." Where patience can have her perfect work, whether in the stress and strain of conflict, or in the trial of waiting, there it is good to be.—Z. Jan. '84:2.

COMMUNION *with* God must ever hold a higher place than service *for* God. Do we realize it?—Z. Nov. '84:2.

TWISTED TOGETHER.—Our word *strength* comes from a word signifying twisted together. "The Lord is the strength of my life"; "God is the strength of my soul." Then my life is twisted together with the Lord. God and my soul are as two strands twisted together. One may have no strength at all, but while twisted together with one that is infinite, the weakest shall not fail. Then with what confidence we may say, "The Lord is the strength of my salvation."—Z. Oct. '84—page 8.

Let all the meek fully awake to the trial of the hour; and while many are putting stumbling blocks in the way of the "feet" of the body of Christ, let each soldier of the cross be vigilant, not only to stand, but to assist others—*bearing up* the "feet."—Psa. 91:11, 12.—Z. '06, 237.

It is all-important that we have more than forms of justice, of righteousness; we must have the *spirit* of righteousness, a *love* of righteousness—a sincere desire to know and to do God's will, else like as the Jews condemned and killed the Just One we might with forms of justice condemn and injure his "brethren." And to have the desirable condition of *love* for God and for righteousness implies a full consecration of heart to the Lord. Thus every examination of the subject brings us back to the fact that *full* consecration to the Lord, *full* self-surrender to his will as revealed in his Word, is the only proper and only safe course for any to pursue if they would hope to hear the Master's words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."—Z. '99-121.

If the stranger come with enticing words, saying, Let me show you a *broader salvation* than that you have learned from the apostles and prophets to hope for; the true sheep says, That sounds very benevolent, and yet it has not the ring of the Shepherd's voice in it. No, this voice that prophesies smooth things, contrary to the Word of God, is not the voice of the good Shepherd.—Z. '92, 133-134.

It is not for us to question the methods of Divine Wisdom, but rather to remember that "The Lord knoweth them that are his." We may esteem brethren too highly or insufficiently, but the Lord knows the heart and makes no mistake. Then, too, each of the called ones has a will of his own. It is not our flesh that is being tested, but our wills; hence the necessity for watching our hearts and keeping very humble; otherwise pride or ambition may enter and in a few months, or even a few days, or hours or moments might work havoc to all our character development, from the Lord's viewpoint.

Ah! how carefully we should heed the words, "Keep thy heart with all diligence (thy will, thy affections), for out of it are the issues of life"—life eternal or death eternal.—Prov. 4:23.—Z. '08, 372.

God lays great stress upon loyal and loving *obedience* on the part of all his children. It was only a little matter of disobedience that cost Adam and his posterity so dearly, and that will bring similar results to all those who, having once escaped the condemnation of death through faith in Christ the Redeemer, thereafter refuse to stand before God in the robe of his righteousness, but prefer to appear in their own. All such were appointed to stumble; but blessed are the meek, for they shall STAND (FAST). "The Lord knoweth them that are his."—Z. '05, 266.

Our good fight of faith, as the Apostle explains, consists in a considerable measure in our defense of the Word of God, which includes also our defence of the character of God. This is implied in the Apostle's words, "Contend (fight earnestly) for the faith *once delivered unto the saints.*" This will mean our willingness to stand for the Truth at any cost and against any number of assailants.—Z. '03-423.

Our Redeemer prayed, "Sanctify them with thy truth, thy Word is truth," and the Scripture tells us of some who, not having sufficient love for the truth, are abandoned of the Lord to believe a lie, and through that false faith to find ultimately the condemnation of their heart attitude and to be counted unworthy a place with the "Very Elect." Let us set the Word of the Lord above all other messages; yea, more than this, let us prize the divine Word and plan above any of our own misconceptions and imaginings. Thus we shall be willing to buy the truth at any cost and to sell it not for any price. Thus we shall be found acceptable to our Lord, and shall be kept strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, until our trials shall be finished and he shall say, It is enough; come up higher; enter into the joys of thy Lord.—Z. '07-344.

The disciple is not to expect to be above his Lord, but rather to expect to glory in the privilege of being his companion. Let us learn, therefore, to rejoice even in the midst of misrepresentation, falsification, buffetings, scourgings, legal and illegal, farcical—let us count it all joy to be permitted thus to have companionship with our beloved Saviour; let us learn the lesson of patient endurance in well doing, that in due time, not having fainted, we may reap the glorious reward of joint-heirship with him in his Kingdom.—Z. '06-366.

Nothing can come to the child of God by chance. It is blessed to thus yield ourselves wholly to the Lord in perfect trust, confidence and resignation. It brings a peace that none can know who do not place themselves fully in His hands in childlike faith, glad to let Him lead where He will. It is a lack of faith that causes a fear to yield ourselves thus wholly to God; and "without faith it is impossible to please Him." (Hebrews 11:6.) If we really believe in His Infinite Love for us, and in His Infinite Wisdom and Power, we cannot doubt Him.—Z. '17-246.

Right and truth must and shall prevail when our Kingdom has been established (Matt. 6:10; Luke 12:32; 22:29), however feeble now may be the voices lifted in their defence. Let our sentiments and our course of action always be noble and pure, and on the right side of every subject that comes forward for ventilation and investigation; for we should be "a peculiar people, zealous of good works."—Titus 2:14.—Z. '94:85.

INTERESTING LETTERS

Alberta, August 2nd, 1919.

Dear Brother in the Lord:

A sister and I are sending $—— for fund. Nothing else seems to me that comes from time to time, could be of more help to us than the articles in Corn Gems, Isa. 30:21, comes to my mind so much, and I rejoice that the Lord has opened a channel through which we are enabled to hear the voice from behind. I am especially thankful for the article on Judgment, its use and its abuses, also kernels on page 16. We know God will lead each of his own, no matter how isolated, St. John 10:27-30. With the eye of faith we see the final crisis approaching, but we need not fear that trust in the Lord, the prayer our Dear Shepherd uttered, St. John 17:20, in our behalf, is still before our Heavenly Father. Praise God, we are given all we need (the whole armor of God) against this evil day, with directions how to put it on, by all His Holy servants, and how to wear it by Paul Eph. 6:18, should not be overlooked. Read today's manna text by pastor with comments.

May God's richest blessing rest upon all His saints till we hear, well done ,and enter His rest is our prayer.

With Christian love,

SISTER F. B. V.

California, July 24, 1919.

May love, joy and peace be yours today in the Lord's service.

Brethren, I have read a few of your prayers, and my how much good they did me. I was almost sick. We have had milk so long, then to get Old Corn Gems did me a lot of good. The article, cast not away your confidence, was just what I needed to show me where I was. Thanking you for the good you are doing, may the Lord richly bless you. I would like the Old Corn Gems sent to me and let me know what they cost.

Your Brother in the one hope,

J. H. M.

after reading please give to Bro
Ross Peterson.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER SIXTEEN

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FAITH AND FEELING

Feeling should never be mistaken for faith, yet there is as much connection between faith and hallowed feeling as there is between the root and the flower. Faith is permanent, just as the root is ever in the ground. Feeling is casual and has its season. Just as the root or bulb does not always shoot up the green stem and beautiful flowers, so faith does not always produce ecstasy of feeling. Our faith may be just as strong when we are despondent as when we are filled with joy. As we feel the calamities of war, the pangs of disease and the hardness of poverty, our feeling sinks down to zero, while our faith may be as firm as the granite that underlies the cloud-kissing hills. Measure not God's love and power by your own feeling. The sun shines as clearly in the darkest day as it does in the brightest; the difference is not in the sun, but in some clouds that are between you and the sun. So God loves as well when we see not the brightness of his countenance as when we do.

One of the things we learn by a Christian experience is that low measures of feeling are better than ecstasies for ordinary life. God sends us his rain in gentle drops, else tender plants and delicate flowers would be beaten to pieces. If our faith is founded on the immutability of God, our Christian life and love will flow steadily on like a deep river, not easily affected by a cold blast nor obstructed by despondencies. Moses was not governed by feeling when he stood on the margin of the Red Sea, neither was Abraham when he offered up Isaac, nor Israel when they compassed Jericho seven days. Have faith in God, move forward all along the line, and we shall have the victory.—Z. '92-267-268.

The Way of the Righteous

Psalm 1:1-6.

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."—Psa. 1:1.

The first three verses of this lesson picture the perfect man, the man whose heart is perfected in holiness, the pure in heart. Hence the picture is pre-eminently that of the perfect man, Christ Jesus, and secondarily that of those imperfect men and women who, being justified by faith in Christ, are, as New Creatures, walking in their Master's footsteps, and hence right at heart, even though sometimes imperfect through the weaknesses of their earthen vessels.

The first verse shows three steps, (1) the ungodly—literally, the *wicked,* (2) sinners or *transgressors,* and (3) scorners or the *conceited and unteachable.*

The proper course is to have no *fellowship* (sympathy and common interest) with people of any of these classes. This, of course, does not mean that we are to treat them unkindly or discourteously, nor that we are never to be seen walking, standing or sitting with such; but it does imply that our company should, as far as possible, be select, and of those who reverence our God, and that other fellowships should not be encouraged.

A greater number, perhaps, are in danger of getting into fellowship with the scorners or unteachable than with the others: yet fellowship with such leads to the same spirit; and that leads gradually to violation of the covenant with God; and that leads to open wickedness and wilful sin. The profitable. . . . . Come out from among them; and neither sit, nor stand, nor walk in fellowship with such. (Rev. safe way is to have no fellowship with darkness: it is never 18:4; Isa. 52:11.) STAND WITH GOD, EVEN IF THAT

Verse 2. Some might suppose that one thus isolated SHOULD SEEM TO IMPLY STANDING ALONE. The Lord knoweth them that are his. . . . .
would have an unhappy lot; but no, he is truly said to have a delightful experience. He delights day and night in meditating upon God's will and plan. In this he finds a joy and a peace which the world and a worldly church can neither give nor take away. One thus consecrated and full of the spirit of the Lord finds that God's laws of righteousness are not restraints which he would fain be freed from; but, like the Master, he can say, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; thy law is engraven in my heart."

Verse 3. Such children of God as have reached this degree of development do not wither away and become dead and barren, but, since the root of their new life is fed by the river of God's grace and truth, they are always fresh and joyous and fruitful—adding to faith virtue, brotherly kindness, love, and so are not unfruitful in either the *knowledge* or the wisdom which surely comes to all who have communion and fellowship with God.

Whatsoever such do shall prosper. They have no plans of their own: they desire that God's will shall be done. And since God's plan shall prosper (Isa. 5:11), their plan shall prosper; for his is theirs.

Verses 4 and 5 describe the reward of the wicked. In God's plan no provision is made for the wicked; and, as the chaff blown by the tornado can never again be found, so the wicked shall have no place after the Lord has thoroughly cleansed the world and swept them into oblivion. . . . .
—Z. '92-90.

* * *

If the Adversary could stir us up to anger, malice, hatred and strife, even in a good cause—even against Satan or those whom he is using to some extent as his servants (Rom. 6:16) —he would thus be poisoning our heart and separating us proportionately from the Lord and His Spirit. WE CANNOT BE TOO CAREFUL ALONG THESE LINES!—Z. '09, 319.

The spirit of compromise with error is the most subtle and dangerous spirit encountered by those who are called to forsake all and follow Christ.—Z. '97-204.

Published by the Stand Fast Bible Students under the supervision of Members of a Committee of Seven. Address all communications—Stand Fast Bible Students, Box 884, Portland, Oregon.

OLD CORN GEMS

NUMBER SIXTEEN

"And they did eat of the OLD CORN of the land on the morrow after the Passover . . . and the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the OLD CORN of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." Joshua 5:11-12.

A SAFE RULE

"WHERE A BROTHER GIVES AN INTERPRETATION OF A SCRIPTURE WHICH DIFFERS FROM THAT GIVEN BY BROTHER RUSSELL, AND BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION SEEMS REASONABLE AND IN HARMONY WITH THE PLAN OF GOD, THEN WE BELIEVE IT A SAFE RULE TO FOLLOW BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION, FOR THE REASON THAT HE IS THE SERVANT OF THE CHURCH, SO CONSTITUTED BY THE LORD FOR THE LAODICEAN PERIOD; AND THEREFORE WE SHOULD EXPECT THE LORD TO TEACH US THROUGH HIM. WHERE THERE ARISES A DOUBT IN THE MIND AS TO WHICH INTERPRETATION IS CORRECT, THEN IT IS ALWAYS SAFER TO RESOLVE THAT DOUBT IN FAVOR OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S INTERPRETATION. WE BELIEVE SUCH TO BE IN HARMONY WITH THE LORD'S WILL. Z. '18:51.

Your Redemption Draweth Nigh

"Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain."—**Isaiah 26:20,21.**

There is an affectionate tenderness about these words of our Heavenly Father which helps us to realize His great love for His people, and His special care over them. But while appreciating very gratefully this special love and care in the comfort, encouragement and protection afforded us by our Heavenly Father in the world's great tribulation, we would come far short of having His Spirit if we should regard the matter with self-complacency, forgetful of His great love for the world also. This love, veiled behind the clouds of His righteous indignation against their sins, in wisdom strikes the heavy blow which will shatter all their idols and humble their pride in the dust, that so the sore wounds of His wrath may prepare them for their everlasting healing. . . . .

But who are those whom the Lord is pleased to designate by the endearing name, "My people"? Does this class include every one upon whom His name is named? No; for that would include a great number of false professors. As the Psalmist expresses it, it includes all those who have made a covenant with God by sacrifice (Psa. 50:5)—all the consecrated and faithful children of God, however young or weak they may be, whose hearts are fixed firmly and resolutely to be truly loyal and obedient children by His assisting grace.

To be numbered among the children of God is a great privilege; but it means much more than many seem to understand—much more both on their part and on God's part. On their part, it signifies, not merely a name to live in some great organization which bears the Christian name, but that they have become sons and heirs of God through Christ; that they have fully consecrated themselves to God to follow in the footsteps of His dear Son; that they have renounced the vain pomp and glory of the world and have solemnly covenanted to live apart from its spirit, ambitions, hopes and aims; and not only so, but that in pursuance of that covenant, they are striving daily to be faithful, and meekly to take up their cross and follow their Leader and Head, Christ Jesus.

On God's part it signifies the fulfilment of all His gracious promises to such through Christ, both for the life that now is, and for that which is to come. *It signifies that in the present life we have His Fatherly love, care, discipline, counsel, teaching, protection and encouragement, TO THE END; and that afterwards we shall be received into His glorious presence, and into everlasting rest, joy and peace. Oh, how blessed to be the people of God! even in the present life the reward of His favor is beyond computation.*

THE "SECRET PLACE" OF HIS SAINTS

The place of hiding is "the secret place of the Most High," "under the shadow of the Almighty." (Psa. 91:1-9.) This secret place of the Most High, Beloved, is the place of intimate communion and fellowship with God, through the blessed privilege of prayer and through faith in His precious Word and His promised providential care.

"When all around our souls gives way,
He then is all our hope and stay."

Oh, how precious is this hiding place! What rest and refreshment we find in the midst of the commotion that is even now bestirring the whole world, but especially the nations of Christendom—rest from the pride and folly of men in their abortive efforts to readjust the present unsatisfactory social order; and rest from the strife of tongues in their equally vain attempt to evolve the clear principles of truth and righteousness from the present confusion of human traditions. (Psa. 31:20.) Here we find rest, peace, light and joy, which the world can neither give nor take away.

Few indeed are those who can understand our motives in thus withdrawing from the world and from the various organizations of the nominal Christian Church, to walk alone with God; and many are the reproaches which such must endure for His name's sake. But fear not; "shut thy doors (of faith) about thee," and heed not the reproaches; turn a deaf ear to them, and "Sanctify the Lord of Hosts Himself, and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread" (Isa. 8:13); and, "Above all, take (for the conflict before you) the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." (Eph. 6:16.) "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (1 Jno. 5:4.)

It is to inspire such a faith as this that the Lord has offered us, in addition to all His precious promises, so many encouragements to simple, childlike trust in Him, and that He has bidden us to turn a deaf ear to the reproaches of man, saying, "Hearken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is My Law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be afraid of their revilings . . . . I, even I, am He that comforteth you; who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of a man that shall be made as grass; and forgettest the Lord thy Maker, that has stretched forth the Heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? . . . . I have put *My Words* in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of Mine hand, that I may plant the Heavens (establish the New Heavens), and lay the foundations of the earth (the new earth), and say unto Zion (the people tried and proved by these afflictions to be the worthy heirs of the new Kingdom—the new Heavens and earth), Thou art MY PEOPLE."—Isa. 51:7, 12, 13, 16.

While the storm of trouble which is engulfing the whole world will affect all men, both individually and collectively, ***the Lord's people, who seek only to draw yet closer to Him, entering more fully into the secret place of communion and fellowship and rest in Him,*** and shutting the doors of faith about them, will there be safely hidden from the alarm and fear and trembling that will take hold upon all other classes. And while they patiently endure its effects upon their temporal interests, they will rejoice not only in the knowledge of *God's overruling Providence, in the whirlwind and in the* storm as well as in the calms of life, but also in His blessed assurance that His wrath will be thus revealed only *"For a little moment,"* and then will His righteous Kingdom be manifested in power and great glory, and they "shall shine forth as the sun."—Matt. 13:43.

Speaking of the trouble at the end of the Gospel Age, our Lord said, "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that *shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."* (Luke 21:36.) Again (rs. 28) He said, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." "My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors."

How much trouble there will be in our passing into the secret "chambers," in passing unto the Lord, we do not know. Yet when this trouble comes, there will be such a blessing from the Lord that those who go through it will be able to rejoice in tribulation. Whatever their experiences will be, these will be joyful in that they will have the thought of being forever with the Lord. We can rejoice even as did St. Stephen.

RETRIBUTION FOR WILFUL SIN

Verse 21 seems to refer to the operation of the principle of justice in God's judgments upon the world. The Heavenly Father stands for Justice, and He has appointed that all of His Mercy shall be exercised through the Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord will be specially identified with the trouble upon the nations, ***but it will not be so much His work as the Father's.*** The Day of Trouble is called the Day of Jehovah. We read that "In that Day His feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives," and that there shall be a great earthquake. —Zech. 14:4.

While God has done nothing for mankind during the past six thousand years, but has rested so far as any work of Restitution is concerned, yet in some instances He has interfered to prevent the spread of evil, as in the case of the Amalekites and of the Sodomites. The Scriptures seem to indicate that in the end of this Age He will intervene in the affairs of mankind, and execute justice in the time of trouble.

In the Scriptures, Justice is, represented as calling for retribution. The blood of the murderers' victims is said to cry for vengeance. Whether the sin has been literal murder, or has been some injustice which has led to crime or suicide, Justice will require of humanity this much of retribution on this score. Justice demands that the children of Adam shall suffer. The Church of Christ is a separate class, taken out from the world and having their sins forgiven. They are upholders of Truth and righteousness. But this time of trouble coming upon the world will be the time when Justice will get its dues, so to speak. Justice will take its "pound of flesh." It will requite for the more or less wilful sins of humanity. The class that has reaped the benefit of the spoliation of the poor in the past, will have to pay some of the toll to Justice in squaring the accounts. The Apostle James says, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you." We are not to think, however, that in this present time God is dealing with the rich. None are on trial now except the Church of Christ. The others are merely the world of mankind, one part of *which God will permit to wreak a measure of vengeance on* the other part. But man's extremity will be God's opportunity. His appointed time for the establishment of His Kingdom will have come, and He will cause this wrath of man to work out good for humanity.

Those who are causing this trouble to come on are not aware of what they are doing. But when satisfaction shall have been made to Justice, Messiah's Kingdom will interpose. We read that "except those days should be shortened, *there should no flesh be saved." This exacting of a penalty* for such sins as we have enumerated is not at all in conflict with the Bible teaching that Christ died for sin. Jesus pays the ***sin-debt*** of the world.

The ***sin-debt*** of the world was a death penalty. Unless the Lord Jesus had met that penalty, the world would never be released. That death penalty would have remained upon the world, without any injustice in any way. The selfishness which has led to *murder* is, however, much more than the meeting of Adam's *sin penalty* by our Lord. Whoever has, through injustice, been responsible for murderous conditions is held responsible for those conditions.

We read that in the end of the Jewish Age our Lord said that God would require from that generation a reckoning for all the righteous bloodshed from the time of Abel down. (Matt. 23; 35.) And the trouble which came upon the Jewish nation in the end of their Age fully settled that account. They had light and knowledge, and thus were held responsible. They were obliged to suffer because of the injuries that were not only perpetrated by some, but endorsed or winked at by others.

LIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITY

In the close of this Age, it would seem, the judgment of the Lord will be upon Christendom, which has had much light, although at times only a refracted light. But a measure of responsibility has come with it, and apparently the Lord's edict is that they *shall not escape the penalty. From this* generation He will require all the righteous blood shed during this Age, upon it, even as He did from the Jews in the end of their Age. This will cause the great time of trouble here, as it did there. So far as the world is concerned, they might not perceive the relationship between this time and the past. We know only from the Scriptures. God gives us this understanding, that we may have the greater poise and comfort of mind.

In thinking of the nature of the tribulation at the end of this Age, we are first of all to remember that it is a tribulation coming upon the world and the hypocrites. The Lord tells us that if we are faithful, we shall not come into the condemnation coming upon the world. The intimation is that those who are not faithful enough to get into the Little Flock will come into this condemnation with the world. So the Lord tells us of some who will get their portion with the hypocrites.—Matt. 24:51. . . . . . The hypocrite class will include the rich of this world. These are addressed by St. James, 5:1-6. In these verses, the Apostle is turning aside from his line of thought. Then he addresses the Church again. The trouble will be especially hard on the rich, who are represented as weeping and howling for misery.

The Great Company class is typically represented by the scapegoat of Israel's Atonement Day ceremonies. The bullock typifies our Lord Jesus, and the Lord's goat His faithful followers. (Heb. 13:11-13.) AFTER the faithful ones have finished their course, then something will be done with the scapegoat—the Great Company. The account in Leviticus is very specific that the high priest will then lay upon the head of the scapegoat all the iniquities of all Israel. (Lev. 16:21.) All the sins of all the people were laid upon the head of the scapegoat, that it might bear them away—make full satisfaction. As has been suggested, God has made provision for the cancellation of original sin through Christ, and has made arrangements for the satisfaction of Justice, so far as all the other sins of the world are concerned, through the Great Company class.

There is a correspondency between the end of the Jewish Age and the end of this Gospel Age in this way: As expiation for the taking of the life of Jesus was required of the Jewish nation, so at the end of the Gospel age, *the sacrificed life of the Church will in a measure be required of nominal Spiritual Israel.*

The Lord seems to give this suggestion, when He says that "the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, it shall be required of this generation." (Luke 11:50, 51.) And St. Paul writes that all things written in the prophecies shall be fulfilled. So in the end of this Age there are certain things charged up against Christendom for their evil deeds. This will include all the persecutions of this Gospel Age, including also, presumably, all the persecutions against the Jews. Therefore the Scriptures indicate that a great time of trouble similar to that which came upon the Jewish nation will now come upon all Christendom.—Z. '13, 179-181.

TEMPTATION TO OBTAIN DESIRED GOOD RESULTS BY COMPROMISE

Satan's third temptation we may presume was presented in a friendly and sympathetic manner. . . . He took our Lord mentally to a very high symbolic mountain (kingdom). He pictured before him the immensity of his (Satan's) own power throughout the world, his control of all the nations and peoples to a large extent, and this our Lord subsequently acknowledged when he referred to Satan as "the prince (ruler) of this world." This panoramic presentation of Satan's power and influence throughout the world was designed to impress upon the mind of our Redeemer the thought that Satan's friendship and assistance would be most valuable—nay, almost of vital importance to the success of his mission, and hence that it was very fortunate indeed that at this juncture Satan had called upon him in so friendly a mood, and that he apparently so sincerely welcomed his efforts and was ready to co-operate therewith. . . . . . .

Our Lord's reply to this last temptation shows that it fully awakened him to a realization of the fact that there was no real reformation at work in Satan's heart; that he was still ambitious, self-seeking, as at the beginning of his downward course; and he realized that to even discuss the matter further with one who had thus avowed his real sentiments would be disloyalty to the Father, and hence his words, "Get thee hence, Satan," . . . . . "I am operating along the line of the declaration, "Thou shalt worship (reverence) the Lord thy God, and *him only shalt thou serve.*"

We may readily discern that this temptation of our Lord was but a sample illustration of such as beset his followers all along the narrow way, from the same source, directly or through agencies. Satan, through his various mouthpieces, is continually saying to the saints, Here is a more successful way of accomplishing your object than that which you are pursuing, a more successful way than the Lord's way. *BEND A LITTLE; make compromise with the worldly spirit; do not hew too close to the line of the word of God and the example of the Lord Jesus and the apostles; YOU MUST BE MORE LIKE THE WORLD, IN ORDER TO EXERT AN INFLUENCE,* . . . thus alone can you have influence and accomplish your good desires toward men. But our dear Master assures us that we are to be faithful to the Lord and to his plan, and let things work out as best they may along that line; and that we may rest assured that in the end the Father's plan not only is the best but really the only plan for accomplishing his great designs, and that if we would be associated therein with him as colaborers, it must be by recognizing him as our only Master, and with an eye single to his approval.

Our Lord's utter refusal of every other way of carrying out his mission than the one which the Father had marked out, the way of self-sacrifice, the narrow way, was indeed a great victory. The adversary left him, finding nothing in him that he could take hold of or work upon, so thoroughly loyal was he to the very word and the spirit of Jehovah. And then, the trial being ended, we read that holy angels came and ministered to our Lord—doubtless supplying him with refreshment such as he had refused to exercise the divine power to obtain for himself. And such we may recognize as being the experience of our Lord's followers: with victory comes a blessing from the Lord, fellowship of spirit, refreshment of heart, a realization of divine favor that makes stronger for the next trial.

Another lesson here is that temptation does not imply sin. As our Lord was tempted "without sin" so may his brethren be if they follow his example and with purity of heart, purity of intention, seek only the Father's will. Sin could only come through yielding to the temptation. *But let us not forget that hesitancy after the wrong is seen increases the power of the temptation.*—Z. '00-31-32.

Our thought is that for the testing of this hour the Lord permits the Adversary to come very close to the tempted, so that the slightest inclination in their hearts towards evil would quickly put them in contact with the adverse influence of the Adversary. No wonder, then, it is the hour of temptation! No wonder all except the saints, the "very elect," will be unable to STAND (FAST)! The saints, as they find the close approach of the Adversary, will draw nearer and nearer to the Lord and feel restful and content only "under the shadow of the Almighty." And they will thank God for any help at hand, such as the Vow, which he may send to assist them into the "secret place of the Most High."—Z. '09, 283.

OFFENDED BECAUSE OF ME

"Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad."—Matt. 26:31.

We are not to understand this Scripture to teach that God directly smote the Shepherd, but rather that he permitted the Adversary to smite him. As our Lord said, "The Son of Man indeed goeth, as it is written of him, but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed." Judas was a free moral agent, and only by entertaining evil thoughts respecting the Master did his heart get more and more out of the way until the last barrier of his will surrendered, and then "Satan entered into him" in the sense of having full control of a willing tool.

Little is told us of Judas, except that at heart he was selfish and mercenary. Doubtless he became a follower of Christ with more or less of sincere motives. He saw the miracles; he knew of their genuineness. He was one of the twelve Jesus sent forth endued with power to heal diseases, to cast out devils, etc. He knew there was no fake connected with it, but that the power of God through Jesus had for a time exercised itself through himself and the other Apostles miraculously. But apparently his heart was less attracted by our Lord's purity of life and holiness of teaching and self denials, and more attracted by the glorious prospects which Jesus held forth in the promises that those who followed him in his time of trial and rejection of men should ultimately sit with him on his throne, ruling and judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Judas allowed the natural selfishness of his nature to specially covet the honors and glories promised, rather than to appreciate the principles of righteousness and truth illustrated in our Lord's life and teachings. Note the difference in the sentiment expressed by James and John. While not forgetting the honors promised, their especial thought was love for the Lord and a desire to be near him and to be associated in the glorious work of the Kingdom, in the uplifting of Israel and all the nations. The loving disciple who leaned on Jesus' breast at the Memorial Supper evidently thought less of the glories of the Kingdom than of the nearness to the Master when making the request that he and his brother might sit on the throne of the Lord, the one on his right hand and the other on his left.

The selfish propensities are generally larger in proportion than the nobler ones in all mankind, and consequently under present conditions, they are likely to be the more active ones in all of us. Hence our need continually of setting our affections on the higher things, the nobler things, and to this end the necessity of having before our minds continually the glorious character of our Lord and our heavenly Father—their justice, their love and mercy—that we may be copies of God's dear Son, and like unto our Father which is in heaven. Judas failed to develop such noble qualities, and, instead, cultivated the baser qualities in connection with his calling to discipleship. He thought of the throne and the honors attached thereto until everything else seemed of little advantage.

This being so, he was critical of the Master, and faultfinding. From his standpoint, Jesus was carrying on the campaign for the throne in an improper manner; *He should have been more worldly-wise;* he should have done this, and should not have done that. Instead of reproving the Pharisees he should have cajoled them, or at least have said nothing against them. Instead of criticising the multitude that desired to make him a king, and withdrawing himself from them, to meet Judas' conception of wisdom he should have spoken sympathetically to them and made capital out of the occasion. Instead of speaking to the multitudes in parables and dark sayings, he should have come down to their comprehension and explained to them about his Kingdom, and how he intended to establish it.

Judas could see no sense, we may be sure, in our Lord's dark saying, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." After that saying many of his followers remarked, "This is a hard saying, who can believe it?" and walked no more with him. Surely Judas must have been offended on that occasion. From his standpoint Jesus was balking all of his prospects, and the hopes of the Kingdom were going glimmering more and more every day. The Lord was becoming more pessimistic, and instead of talking about the Kingdom and the throne was telling how the Jews would shortly take him and crucify him.

Judas began to feel that if he had been deceived in this matter, and was not to sit upon the throne as at first expected, he had best be "feathering his nest" financially in advance, so that however matters might go with the Master and the others, he would not have made such a failure as they. With this in view, doubtless he had sought to be the treasurer of the little band, and had appropriated to his own profitable uses whatever surplus was from time to time contributed. The basis for this assumption is found connected with the story of the anointing of Jesus at Bethany, when Mary produced a very costly perfume and therewith anointed our Lord. It was Judas who murmured at this waste, and remarked how much good might have been done with this money in providing for the poor. Not that he cared especially for the poor, but that he was a thief and carried the treasurer's bag for the disciples, and appropriated to himself from what was put therein.—John 12:6.

GAIN INSTEAD OF GODLINESS

This selfish spirit not only led him to rob the Lord and his fellow-disciples, but eventually led him to think of how he could obtain money from the priests for the betrayal of the Master. And of course there must have been some reasonable philosophy in his mind in connection with the matter, and not merely a cold-blooded deal to put Jesus to death—not merely cold-blooded murder. WHEN SELFISHNESS HAS CONTROL OF THE HEART IT WORKS ALL MANNER OF DECEITFULNESS TO THE MIND AS RESPECTS MOTIVES, INTENTIONS, ETC. And this is true whether the ambition be for money or for name and fame. Doubtless Judas reasoned that he could make the money out of the transaction without working any injury to the Lord. Jesus could again, as on previous occasions, "pass through their midst" without any daring to touch him. Perhaps Judas reasoned further that his course would awaken the Master and bring matters respecting the Kingdom to a head, one way or the other; that Jesus, finding himself in the hands of his enemies, would either assert his great power and assume his kingly authority, or else his weakness and fraudulent claims by which he had deceived his disciples and others would be exposed.

By such subtle reasonings and deceptions the Adversary was able to lead the disloyal mind, the selfishly ambitious heart, into wrong paths. As we realize this, and how the same Adversary still operates along similar lines, we may well fear to come in any degree under his power or misguiding influence. Not many of us would dare to find fault with the Lord and his methods directly, but we could still do so indirectly. He who then supervised the affairs of himself and his disciples on earth, now supervises the same from his glorious heavenly station. While fault cannot be found with the words of Jesus directly, fault can still be found with his message through those whom he uses as his mouthpieces. And while the Master himself cannot be betrayed to his enemies, for pieces of silver or other earthly advantages, or in satisfaction of other earthly ambitions, "his brethren" can thus be dealt with.

We have the Master's word, that whatsoever injury shall be done IN WORD or in deed to one of the least of his little ones, it is the same in his estimation as though it were done to himself; and it were better for that man that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he had been cast into the depths of the sea; better because in that event there would have been a future prospect for him during the Millennial Kingdom, whereas, having been once enlightened, having once tasted the heavenly gift, having once been under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and then to completely fall away, there would remain no more for him an interest or share in the heavenly gift—in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. Having received his share of it, he misused it, and can have no further interest in it.

Judas was thus made acquainted with the heavenly gift and the powers of the age to come, not by direct reception of the same as experienced at Pentecost, but by the indirect blessing which came upon the twelve through our Lord's special impartation to them of the power of the Holy Spirit, by which they were enabled to work miracles in his name.

"THE SHEEP SHALL BE SCATTERED"

We must never lose sight of the fact that the harvest of the Jewish Age was completely under Divine supervision and control. The Lord willed that severe testings should come to the sheep through the Master whom they loved and revered. Those testings were necessary. "Through much tribulation shall ye enter the Kingdom." *The way to glory must be the way of the cross—A NARROW WAY—and there must be something permitted which would serve to make the way narrow;* hence the permission of evil, the permission of a measure of liberty to Satan, and the permission of a measure of liberty to ambitious men.

It is not for us to become bitter toward Satan or any of those who develop an ambitious and injurious spirit similar to his. In so doing we would be cultivating in ourselves that which would be injurious to us. On the contrary, all the opposition of Satan and those who have his characteristics should exercise upon us an opposite spirit. We should pity them, while detesting their methods. We should be ready to do good to them, while loathing their course. We are not to render evil speaking for evil speaking, nor insinuation for insinuation, nor anger for anger, nor malice for malice, nor hatred for hatred.

On the contrary, as the Apostle suggests, even Michael, though higher in power, durst not bring against Satan a railing accusation, but merely said, The Lord rebuke thee! So it should be with us: Instead of attempting to take vengeance upon our adversaries, we should commit our way and theirs to the Lord's keeping, and trust that in due time he will rebuke the Adversary and all who have his spirit and follow his course. He will know how to make proper allowances for head and heart. He it is who has said, "Vengeance is mine, I will recompense, saith the Lord."

"OFFENDED BECAUSE OF ME"

So far as our Lord's personality was concerned, we may be sure there was no cause of offense in him; he did nobody harm, but did everybody good. It was his doctrines that offended the people, and not his personality; nevertheless, *their resentment was against his personality rather than against his doctrines, which were too strong for them to attack.*

On one occasion we remember when they took up stones to stone him, Jesus expostulated with them, saying, I have done a good work and ye all marvel. Why, then, are you about to stone me? They answered that it was not for anything personal, but because of his doctrine. The Adversary deluded them, and made the words of him who spake as never man spake to *appear false* and God-dishonoring, whereas they were very true.

Our Lord said, "Marvel not if the world hate you; ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own. But now ye are not of the world, because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." This implies that in proportion as we follow closely in the Master's footsteps our experiences will be proportionately similar to his. We shall be hated, not because of evil deeds to others, but because whoever is out of harmony with the truth of God's Word will be out of harmony with those who speak the truth, and verily think that they do God a service in opposing them.

Notice also that the world that will hate you is not the heathen world, not the Gentile world, but the worldly who pose as God's people. This was so with Jesus. He preached, not to the Gentiles, but to the holy nation of the Jews, God's consecrated people. And those who hated him and delivered him unto death were of his own nation, and even Judas of his own disciples. So we also should expect, in harmony with our Lord's words, that the worldly who will hate us will be the worldly-spirited ones, ADVERSARIES PROMINENT IN THE CHURCH, and some of them perhaps, close to us as fellow-disciples.

SEEING THESE THINGS IN ADVANCE, BEING THUS FORE-WARNED, SHALL WE NOT BE FORE-ARMED, SO THAT NONE OF THESE EXPERIENCES MAY MOVE US FROM OUR CONSTANCY AND FAITHFULNESS? Let us remember the Apostles of old, and how the smiting of the Shepherd affected them, and scattered them, and confused them, so that of the two who followed him at all one in terror denied him with cursing, while the other, the loving disciple, viewed the Master sympathetically, but afar off.

Our Lord had forewarned them, and had instructed them how they might have been better prepared for this trial, but they had not heeded his words, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Hence in the moment of temptation they were overwhelmed, scattered. The lesson to us is that we should watch and pray, and by faith draw very near to the Master, and be full of confidence in the Divine plan, and remember the assurance that all things are working together for good to them that love the Lord, to them that are called according to his purpose.

Watching and praying will cultivate confidence and faith in God, and preserve us from the trepidation and fear and stumbling which will surely upset many others; because from this standpoint of faith we shall know how to apply in our own time and under our own circumstances our Lord's words to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all over me except it were permitted of my Father." God is still at the helm, and is still working all things according to the counsel of his own will. It is for us to come close to the Lord and to wait for the development of his plan with absolute confidence and fearlessness—except in the sense that we should fear to leave undone anything directed in his Word.

Thus our Lord feared in Gethsemane, and in due time received Divine assurance and the strengthening of his heart, and the calm rest and peace which properly accompanied that assurance. *So it will be with us "after that we have suffered awhile" and our faith has been properly tested, the Lord will give us succor and "grace to help IN EVERY TIME OF NEED."*—Z. '09-298-300.

The very condition upon which we may attain the Kingdom is our faithful endurance of shame, contempt, misunderstanding, and our demonstration to the *last* of humility and absolute loyalty to God and full resignation to his providences.—Z. '10-265.

WHAT OUR LORD FEARED AND FROM WHAT HE WAS SAVED

"Christ . . . was heard in that he feared."—Heb. 5:7.

That which the Lord feared was not that the love or promises of God would fail. He knew that God was faithful who had promised; that God is a covenant-keeping God, and that all his conduct and dealings are founded upon the eternal principles of truth and righteousness, from which to vary in the least iota would be a moral impossibility. But the Lord also knew that the plan of human salvation was made dependent upon the obedience of the Anointed High Priest to every jot and tittle of the Law concerning Him, as shown in the typical service of the Tabernacle. Not only must the sacrifice be made, but it must be offered exactly as prescribed.

If the typical high priest, Aaron, had at any time failed to conform to the directions given for the offering (see Lev. 9:16); if he had forgotten or ignored any part of the directions; *or if he had substituted some of his own ideas,* he would not have been allowed to sprinkle the blood of such imperfect sacrifice upon the mercy-seat; his offering would not have been accepted; he would have died, and so could never have come out and blessed the people.—Lev. 16:2, 3.

Thus we see that when undertaking the great work of redemption our Lord bore in himself the issues of life and death, not only for the whole human race, but for himself as well. Figuratively speaking, he took his life into his own hands. No wonder, then, if under the weight of his responsibility, the Lord feared! The tension of the trials to which he was subjected was too great for even the perfect human nature, unaided by Divine grace. Therefore he frequently sought the place of prayer for grace to help in every time of need.

Consider the great fight of afflictions through which he passed; the subtle and deceptive temptations in the wilderness (SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vol. 5, pp. 110-117); the contradiction of sinners against himself, and the base ingratitude of those he came to save; consider also his poverty, his loss of friends, his labors and weariness, his homelessness, his bitter and relentless persecutions and, finally, his betrayal and dying agony! Surely the tests of endurance and of obedience to the exact requirements of the Law of sacrifice, under these circumstances, were most crucial. What carefulness it wrought in the Lord; for he feared, lest the promise having been left him of entering into the rest that remaineth and the glory to follow the Day of Atonement, he should come short of the full requirements of his Office as Priest, to render acceptable service. So also, says the Apostle (Heb. 4:1), should *we* fear lest a promise being left us of entering into *his rest*, any of us should seem to come short of it.

"THE CUP WHICH MY FATHER HATH POURED FOR ME SHALL I NOT DRINK IT?"

When the Lord came to the last night of his earthly life, then the question came to his mind with increased force, "Have I thus far done everything in *exact accordance* with the will of God? And now, in full view of the agony which it will cost, am I able to drink the bitter cup to its very dregs? Can I endure, not only the physical agony, but also the ignominy and shame and cruel mockings? And can I do it so perfectly as to be entirely acceptable to God in my own righteousness? Can I endure to see my disciples scattered and dismayed and my lifework apparently destroyed, my name and the cause of God covered with infamy, and my enemies triumphant and boastful? Can I do this so as to hear the 'well done'?"

Such was our Lord's last conflict. Doubtless the powers of darkness were busy in that awful hour, taking advantage of the circumstances and of his weakness and weariness to discourage his hope and to fill his mind with fears that, after all, he would fail, or *had* failed to do the work acceptably; and that a resurrection, therefore, was uncertain. No wonder that the perfect human heart sank before such considerations and that an agony of emotion brought great drops of bloody sweat! But did he *yield* to the discouragement and give up the struggle when the crucial test was thus upon him? No! he took those human fears to the Heavenly Father, "to him who was able to deliver him out of death," in order that his human will might be reinforced by Divine grace to go forward and complete his sacrifice acceptably to God; to freely submit to be led away as a lamb to the slaughter, and, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so to open not his mouth in self-defense.—Isa. 53:7.

His prayers to the Father were not in vain: "He was heard in that he feared." Though his words were few (because no words could express the emotions of his soul) his chastened spirit was all the while making intercession for him with groanings which could not be uttered. (Rom. 8:28.) Then God sent an angel to comfort and minister unto him; to assure him still of the Divine favor, and thus to give him fresh courage, strength of mind and steadiness of nerve to endure all that was before him, *even unto death*.

With this assistance of Divine grace our dear Lord went forth from that moment with undaunted courage to finish the work which was given him to do. Calmly he could come now and say to his beloved, but weary and bewildered disciples, "Sleep on, now, and take your rest." The bitterness of the mental conflict was over, and the light of heaven shining into his soul had chased away the deep gloom that hung over him like a funeral pall, making him "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Yes, "he was heard in that he feared"; and the fear was all taken away; and, strong in the strength which God supplied, he felt that he was able to offer the acceptable sacrifice, to meet every jot and tittle of the requirement of the Law in doing so; and hence, that his salvation *out of death*, his *resurrection*, was assured.

"LEARNED OBEDIENCE THROUGH THE THINGS WHICH HE SUFFERED"

The fear on the Lord's part was not a sinful fear. It was a fear such as we, also, are exhorted to have—we who are striving to walk in his footsteps—lest we fail to realize the precious promises vouchsafed to us upon conditions that are positive and unalterable. (Heb. 4:1.) It was a fear begotten, not of doubt of the Father's ability and willingness to fulfill all his promises, but of a knowledge of the righteous principles which must in every case govern the Father's course of action; a fear of the inflexible Law which righteously affixed the reward of eternal life and glory to his fulfilling of his Covenant of sacrifice, or of eternal death should he fail. At the same time he began to realize that, though perfect as a human being, his heart and his flesh would fail unless reinforced by Divine grace. The Psalmist expressed this fear of the Lord and the source from which his help came, when he said, "My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." (Psa. 73:26.) It was a filial fear entirely compatible with his relationship to God as a recognized Son; for "though he were Son, yet learned he obedience through the things which he suffered." —Heb. 5:8.

We are glad that Jesus was not cold and stoical, but that he was full of warm, loving, tender feelings and sensibilities; and that we, consequently, can realize his ability to sympathize with the most tender, the most delicate, the most refined, the most sensitive, more than could any other human being. He must have felt keenly the conditions under which he had placed himself, in laying down his life on our behalf; for the more perfect the organism, the more sensitive and high-strung are the feelings; the greater the capacity for joy, the greater the capacity for sorrow. Being absolutely perfect, our Lord must have been immeasurably more susceptible to the influence of pain than are others.

"OFFERED UP STRONG CRYINGS AND TEARS TO HIM WHO WAS ABLE TO SAVE HIM"

Besides this, he knew that he had a perfect life, *unforfeited*, and realized that he was about to part with it. Others of the human family possess only a forfeited or condemned existence, and realize that they *must* part with this some time. It would, therefore, be a very different matter for our Lord to lay down his life from that of any of his followers laying down theirs. If we let one hundred per cent. represent perfect life, our Lord had the full one hundred per cent. to lay down, while we, being more than ninety-nine one hundredths dead through trespasses and sins and condemnation could, at most, have had but one one-hundredth part to lay down. A cold, stoical indifference to the loss of life, based upon knowledge that it could last but a short time longer at best, would, therefore, be a very different thing from the clear knowledge which our Lord had of the experience which he had with the Father "before the world was"; and the realization that the life he was about to lay down was *not forfeited* through sin, but was his own voluntary sacrifice.

There can be no doubt that this thought of the extinguishment of life was an important factor in our Lord's sorrow. The Apostle clearly intimates it in the words (Heb. 5:7), "Who in the days of his flesh . . . . offered up prayers and supplication, with strong cryings and tears, unto him who was able to save him from (out of) death, and was heard in (respect to) that he feared"—*extinction.* This thought brought with it another, viz., Had he done the Father's will perfectly? Could he claim and would he receive the reward promised him—*a resurrection from the dead?*

Had he failed in any particular to come to the exact standard of perfection his death would have meant extinction; and although all men fear extinction, none could know the full depth and force of its meaning as could he who not only had the perfection of life, but had recollection of his previous glory with his Father before the world was. For him the very thought of extinction would bring anguish, terror of soul. This thought seems not to have come to our Lord with the same force previously. It was this, therefore, that bore down upon him now so heavily as an exceeding sorrow unto death. He saw himself about to suffer according to the Law as an evil-doer, and the question naturally arose, was he *entirely* blameless, and would the Heavenly Judge *thoroughly* acquit him whom so many were disposed to condemn?

"COULD YE NOT WATCH WITH ME ONE HOUR?"

After praying he went to his three disciples, but found them asleep. Gently he reproved them asking, "Could ye not watch with me *one hour?* Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Then our Lord went away and used the same words in prayer; and again he prayed a third time, similarly. The matter was weighing upon his heart. Could he rely upon it now, that having sought to do the Father's will, having finished his course, he had done it acceptably? Could he have full assurance of faith that God would save him out of death by a resurrection?

In answer to his petition a heavenly messenger was sent to comfort him, to reassure him, to strengthen him. We are not informed what message the angel brought, but we can see that it was a message of peace; that he brought assurance, not only that the Lord's course had the Father's approval, but that he would be brought again from the dead by a resurrection. These were quite sufficient to give our Lord all the strength and courage necessary for the ordeal before him; and from that moment onward we find him the coolest and calmest of the notable figures brought to our attention. When approached by Judas and his band, he was the most calm and self-possessed of all; when before the chief-priest, Caiaphas, he was the same; when before Pilate, the same; when crucified, the same. He had found peace in the message that he was approved of the Father, and that all the gracious promises of glory, honor and immortality were his; and now he could pass through any ordeal, he could submit himself perfectly to his enemies.—Z. '11-124-126.

THE LORD YOUR GOD PROVETH YOU

"And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many."

"There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold I have told you before."—Matt. 24:11-24.

"If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder come to pass whereof he spoke unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer or dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul."—Deut. 13:1-3.

When the disciples came to Jesus inquiring what should be the sign of his presence and of the end of the age, before answering their question he took occasion to give some important information as to events which should transpire before that time. Among others he foretells the rise of many false prophets and false Christs, and of their power to deceive. Then he adds, "Behold I have told you."

To be forewarned is to be forearmed, if we heed the warning. But forgetting the warning and instruction, the many, as Jesus foretold, are deceived by these pretenders, and because iniquity abounds, the love of many of God's children waxes cold. . . .

The elect of God cannot be deceived; they have walked and are walking with God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, searching, believing and trusting his word, walking in its light and striving to fulfill the conditions for the attainment of its exceeding great and precious promises. This fixedness of purpose, and adherence to it, not only designates such to be the elect of God, but it shields them from the deceptions and snares of false christs and false prophets (teachers). Though many such have doubtless lived and died in those false systems, they overcame their influence through faith and loyalty to God. We should not forget that the separation of the wheat from the tares was not *commanded* until the "harvest." Matt. 13:30. It was the Lord's design to *let* wheat and tares grow together until the harvest; but in this harvest time it is his will that all such should come out and be separate when his truth makes manifest the true character of these systems.

But even after coming out of these anti-Christ or false-Christ systems, there are many false prophets who assume *authority to direct the consecrated, who teach theories subversive of the truth and pervert the Scriptures to support them.* Such false prophets always have been and always will be found, so long as Satan has power in his hands; that is, until he is bound.

And our Heavenly Father permits it so to be: why? To ove his people: "For the Lord your God doth prove you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul." The Lord would prove whether we have received the truth in the love of it and of its Author. It is very often the case that truth is received by some because of their love for those who bear it, and without personal searching to prove that it is from God. Such have not received the truth in the love of IT, and sooner or later some circumstances will unsettle them. If the prop falls into error such will surely fall with it; or if love for the prop grows cold, the love for truth thus received grows cold with it. *But love for our brethren in Christ, and special love for those who serve us most, will never overthrow the faith of those who receive the truth in the love of it.*

Should controversy arise because the way of truth is evil spoken of even among those through whom the blessed Gospel has been received, and who have been greatly loved for their work's sake, it will only impel those who are wholly the Lord's, to a more diligent searching of the Scriptures, and thus more earnest inquiring of the Lord to make very plain the way.

Peter reminds us that there were false prophets in Israel, even as there should be false teachers among us (2 Peter 2:21); and Moses declares that it was permitted to prove Israel. If faithful to God, no consideration of a personal character, should lead them to turn away from God's truth after these false teachers. When we remember that these things happened to Israel as types for our instruction, the words of Moses become very insignificant: "If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods . . . . thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him, neither shall thine eye pity him neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him. But thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death and afterwards the hand of all the people. (Deut. 13:6-9.)

Thus the Lord proved Israel's determination to obey him at the sacrifice of any earthly friendship if need be. And in this Israel was a type of both the world in the age to come and also of the church in the present time. Temptations even from dearest friends to depart from the living God and serve idols, whether those idols be self-exaltation, or any other thing, ***must be RESOLUTELY met with a fixed purpose to follow the Lord wholly.*** Such suggestions may not be harbored nor consented to by those fully consecrated to God, even though they come in the most deceptive disguise, and by dearest friends. And not only so, but deceptive errors and influences must be put to death; they must be pelted to death by the stones of truth. Our weapons are not like those of fleshly Israel—not carnal but spiritual, and mighty in pulling done the strongholds of error. 2 Cor. 10:4.

Ever bearing in mind that the Lord your God doth prove you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and whether your love to him is paramount to every other love, however strong, we may meet the trials of severing friendships and dissolving earthly ties, with firm unflinching confidence in God, who will crown with everlasting joy, the faithful overcomer who has fought *to the end* the good fight of faith.—Z. June '85:7-8.

PEACE IN TRIBULATION

"Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide, keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom; for the son dishonoreth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house. Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation: My God will hear me."—**Micah 7:5-7.**

The beloved and faithful Apostle Paul wisely counseled the Church, saying, "*If it be possible,* as much as lieth *in you,* live peaceably with all men." (Rom. 12:18.) But in the outset he plainly admits that it may not always be possible; and we are taught that to maintain peace under some conditions would be wrong. Paul shows plainly the character of the effort we should make for peace—that we should cultivate a loving, affectionate disposition toward others, in honor preferring one another; not slothfully casting our cares on others, but diligently bearing our own burdens to the full extent of our ability; providing things honest in the sight of all men for ourselves and those dependent upon us, and kindly sympathizing with and helping to bear the burdens of others who are overburdened; putting away vanity and self-conceit; not minding high things, but condescending to men of low estate; and if rewarded with evil, overcoming the evil with good—*if it be possible.*

And yet, strange to say, it is not always possible to secure peace with those about us. even with the most careful manifestation of such a disposition. Peace on such terms is secured with all those who love righteousness, truth, and fair dealing; but it is not so secured with others. *WITH THE WORLD IN GENERAL, PEACE AND HARMONY IS ONLY SECURED BY LOWERING YOUR PRINCIPLES OF TRUTH* and righteousness to conform to their ideas. *Many do this in whole or in part,* and verily they have their reward; for "the world will love its own.' But those who closely adhere to the principles of Christ and faithfully carry them out, must not expect to have peace with the world—"In the world ye shall have tribulation;" "They that will live Godly shall suffer persecution." It is not possible in this age to have it otherwise. The apostles found it so, and so did the Lord. And he said for our encouragement, "If the world hate you, you know that it hated me before it hated you. . . . The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me. If I had not come and spoken unto them they had not had sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. But now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass that the word might be fulfilled that is written,—They hated me *without a cause.*"

If after the same manner, we find persecution instead of peace in the world, we should not think strange of it, *or change our course of action,* but should follow on in our Leader's footsteps, letting our light shine in words and deeds *of no uncertain sound,* however severely they reprove the works of darkness, and bring hatred and persecution from those who love darkness rather than light. If the Lord and the apostles and all the faithful saints had just kept quiet and said nothing about the truth, the kingdom to come and the overthrow of present evil powers civil and religious, in order to its establishment; if they had flattered, approved, and worked in harmony with the Chief-priests and rulers of the synagogues, and conformed to the ideas of the masses of professed religious people; if they had just let them alone to work out their own plans and ideas without interference, doubtless they could have lived at peace with all men and had no persecution. And just as surely as we let the world and worldly religious systems, etc., alone, to do their own will, without warning or remonstrance against their evil character, and erroneous teaching, we also will escape persecution and live at peace with the world. *But as surely as the Lord did not do it we must not do it; unless we are willing* *to turn aside from the narrow way and to give up the prize of our high calling.*

Although the Prophet had foretold that Messiah should be the Prince of Peace, yet when Messiah came, he said in almost the same words as the Prophet above quoted, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's foes shall be they of his own household."—Matt. 10:34-36.

Though this has been true in a measure during the entire age, it is specially true in the harvest or end of the age, when the sickle of truth is doing its work of separation; for in the time of harvest, not only are Christians to be separated from the world, and wheat from tares (the true from the false), BUT THE RIPE WHEAT IS ALSO TO BE SEPARATED FROM THE UNRIPE. And so it will probably be true of the faithful now, as it was true of our Lord, that they shall be *left alone.* He said even to his disciples, "Behold the hour cometh, . . . that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone."—John 16:32.

When our Lord first started in his ministry he was glorified (honored) of all (Luke 4:15), and men "wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth;" yet faithfulness to the truth quickly aroused hatred and opposition. Very soon the great ones in the church began to oppose him bitterly; but still many of the common people heard him gladly. And it seems that persecution from his earthly kindred was not lacking in his case, and that he was unwelcome in the home of his childhood; for he said, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." (Matt. 8:20.) His brethren did not believe on him, and seemed ashamed of the unpopular notoriety which his course brought upon them as a family. And though Jesus walked no more in Jewry (Judea) because the Jews there sought to kill him, his brethren urged him to go, notwithstanding the danger and do some of his mighty works there. But Jesus replied to them, "My time is not yet come, but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth (and they seek my life) because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. Go ye up unto this feast: I go not yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come"—neither the time for manifesting his power to the world, nor to lay down his life as a sacrifice. (John 7.) His mother was doubtless always in sympathy with him, though she could not fully understand him and with a true mother's love, as well as the love of a disciple, she shared his reproach and followed him to Calvary and the tomb.

But while the world, and the nominal church, and they of his own house, were arrayed in opposition to the Lord, he turned to his disciples and said, "Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? He that doeth the will of my Father, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." (Matt. 2:50.) And yet the hour came when even these were scattered, and he was *left alone.* The persecution became so severe that they all fled.

And so it will probably be in the end of this age with the body of Christ. The separation must come closer and closer; friend after friend will depart; and foes will become more numerous and bitter in their opposition, until the reproach will rest so heavily upon the faithful that all not like-minded will depart and leave them alone—*alone in their fearless defence of the truth,* alone in their bold declaration of the presence of Messiah and the setting up of his kingdom which shall overturn and destroy all opposing powers; and alone in bearing whatever of reproach or persecution such a course may bring.

If such is to be the stormy pathway of the saints in this day of separation, how necessary is the council of the Prophet at the head of this article—"Trust ye not in a friend; put ye not confidence in a guide, etc.' *To trust in and take counsel of former friends however dear, with reference to our present course of action, is dangerous.* UNLESS THEY JOIN US IN THE SAME NARROW WAY OF SACRIFICE, we must generally keep our thoughts and purposes to ourselves, with a resolute determination to accomplish our Father's will at any cost; for their very love for us will often cause them to bitterly oppose us. And in the end even that love will sometimes turn to hatred.

We may not put confidence now in former guides however much we had esteemed and reverenced them—whether they were the ministers of the nominal church, or parents, or husbands, or *Christians of considerable advancement, highly esteemed for their work's sake.* None of these must be looked to as guides now; for the tests are now being applied to all. —Every man's work is being and shall be yet more thoroughly tested—so as by fire—*and only those who can stand the tests themselves can be helpful to others.* And even the wife (or husband) who hitherto shared your joys and sorrows, and entered into all your plans, will not now be able to sympathize with, or comfort, or help you in this way, unless of the same consecrated class. Hence the counsel of the Prophet, "Keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom." If not of the fully consecrated class, she cannot understand or appreciate the prize for which you run. She can see only the thorns in your way, and her share in bearing some of the reproach with you, and her efforts will, in kindness to you and in the desire to reach her own ambitions, etc., be directed toward dissuading you from your course.

To whom then shall we look? Must we walk the thorny pathway alone—with foes and dangers all about us? If we should, as individuals, be left entirely alone, so far as human sympathy is concerned we should be willing; for the disciple is not greater than his Lord, and he was left alone; yet not alone as he said, "Because the Father is with me." But we are not, and probably shall not be so alone as he was; for other members of the body are now in existence, and their hearts are one in love and sympathy. The Prophet speaking for this class directs us where to look for help, for comfort and consolation, saying, "Therefore, though all other helps and comfort fail) *I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God* of my salvation: *My God will hear me.*"

This must be the attitude of the saints. They must look to the Lord—through his Word—to learn his will, his plan, and the part he would have them take in the execution of that plan, and then go about their Father's business with an eye single to his glory, taking comfort and rejoicing in his words of encouragement, and his exceeding great and precious promises. In him, through his Word, we must find our friend, our comforter and guide. But we must wait patiently the grand outworking of His plan—Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him. Commit thy way unto the Lord, and he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light and thy judgment as the noonday.—Psa. 37:5-7.

During all this time of patient waiting under affliction we rejoice in the full assurance that God is causing all things to work together, as, in his own best time, to establish universal peace on a sure and permanent basis. But before that peace, must come the lash, the tumult, and the storm. Before Christ can reign as 'Prince of Peace," he must rule with the rod of iron, subduing all things unto himself and establishing his own righteous authority. Peace on any other basis than that of righteousness is not a proper peace, nor is it the peace which God wants. In its very nature such a peace cannot last, and while it lasts it is injurious. . . .

There is still another thought to which we would call attention before leaving the subject. It is that precious promise recorded by the Prophet Isaiah (26:3), "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee."

Well, says one, I do not see how this can be true in view of the Scriptures above quoted. It seems to me the Christian's experience if he is faithful, is very far from peaceful. Look at Paul and all the martyred saints of the past; and look at the Lord's sufferings.

True, from the world's standpoint, such experiences look to be far from peaceful; but if it were not for the deep under current, the gentle steady flow of communion and harmony with God, the Christian character could not stand amid the surging billows that disturb the surface. Like an iceberg, towed by a powerful undercurrent, the Christian is upheld and borne onward by the strong undercurrent of peaceful communion with God, and thus moves grandly on in opposition to the counter-surface-currents, steady and tranquil even in the midst of the wildest storms. Men of the world look on and wonder because they know nothing of this grand, silent motive power.

The mind thus stayed on God is kept in perfect peace even in the midst of persecution, just as the depth of ocean is calm and quiet while the surface is lashed with storm and tempest. Peace is not enthusiastic, ecstatic joy, but real joy can never be experienced without the firm foundation of peace. Peace is calm, quiet, restful tranquility. When our Lord said to the raging winds and waves, "Peace be still," "there was a great calm." The sun may or may not have shone out brightly, but no mater, the peace, the calm quiet rest, had come.

It is not continuous, delightful, ecstatic joy, that is promised to the Christian, but this calm, quiet, restfulness, which comes from acquaintance with God and his great plan of salvation, and implicit confidence in his love, and power, and wisdom, which in due time will cause all things to work together for the accomplishment of his grand designs. You may be troubled on every side, but you will not be in distress; you may be greatly perplexed, but you will not be in despair, unless you throw away your confidence in God, *and cease to consider and meditate upon his word.*

Those who abide in him by faith, will never know the feeling of despair. They may see every earthly tie severed, and realize to the full that in following Christ, their bitterest foes are those of their own household, and those whom they once regarded as members of the household of faith; yea, they may realize the loss of all things earthly, yet their peace will never be disturbed, if their minds are stayed on God, trusting in the sure outworking of his marvelous plan, and patiently awaiting and working in harmony with him for its development.—Z. Sept., '88, 6-8.

"WHO IS SUFFICIENT FOR THESE THINGS?"

"For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God, but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ."—2 Cor. 2:15-17.

This ministry, which all the consecrated, as ambassadors for Christ, have received, is one of tremendous import. It greatly influences the final destiny of those to whom we preach this gospel of the Kingdom, the tendency being either to life or to death. The Apostle's language here is another of the solemn warnings of the inspired Word against the danger of the second death, and should wake up any who have been deluded into the idea that there is no such possibility, to a sense of their danger in permitting the great adversary to thus deceive them. There is an equal responsibility on the part both of those who undertake to preach the gospel and of those who hear it. The truth is God's truth, and the responsibility both of speaking and of hearing it is very great.

The Apostle's words show that MANY in his day, as in ours, failed to realize this responsibility, and, to answer their own selfish ends, corrupted the Word of God. To wilfully or recklessly corrupt the Word of God—to vitiate its pure and holy doctrines; to add to it the vain philosophies of ambitious men and seek to support their theories by perverting its truth; to underrate its exceeding great and precious promises and mystify the conditions upon which they may be realized; *or to minimize or make void the solemn warnings of the Word of God—is indeed dangerous business, in which the faithful saints will never engage, but in which those who FALL AWAY from the faith are usually most active—deceiving and being deceived.*

To be faithful ambassadors for Christ—faithful representatives of the truth and faithful proclaimers of it—requires great humility and simplicity of heart. It necessitates the complete ignoring of all worldly ambitions and aims, and the cultivation of a brave spirit of endurance which *will not shrink from any reproach which fidelity to the truth may bring.* And such service, the Apostle here shows, is acceptable to God as sweet incense, no matter what may be the effect upon those to whom we minister, whether they accept or reject the message of divine grace. What God is looking for in us is loyalty to him and devotion to his cause; and this condition of heart he appreciates. . . . . What a comfort it is amidst all discouragements to know that under all circumstances the spirit of Christ in us is as sweet incense to God. And the reward of his constant approval is richer than all the unwholesome sweets of ambition gained by corrupting the Word of God.

To the hearer of this gospel, the message must prove either a savor of life unto (or tending to) life, or a savor of death unto (or tending to) death. His responsibility is great: there is no neutral ground; he either receives it or rejects it. But observe that the statement is not that the rejection of any item of truth inevitably dooms the rejector to death, and vice versa, but that the *tendency* of such a course is to death, *and of the opposite course to life, unless interrupted*—changed.

Thus, for instance, the Lord, in reproving the scribes and Pharisees, who rejected the gospel and yet claimed to be the children of God and leaders and examples of godliness to others, significantly inquired, "How can ye escape the *condemnation of gehenna"—the everlasting destruction,* the second death? (Matt. 23:33.) In rejecting the truth so plainly brought to their attention, and in pursuing the hypocritical course of claiming to be faithful and devoted children of God, they were forming and establishing such characters that, *ere long, repentance would be impossible to them.* Few, perhaps, clearly realize how serious a thing it is to be making character, and that EVERY ACT and EVERY THOUGHT leaves its impress upon the soul. Every right thought and act tends to establish the character in righteousness, while every wrong thought and act, and every self-deception tends to confirm and establish an unrighteous character. And when a wrong course is adopted and persistently followed—when conscience is stifled, and when reason and Scripture are perverted to selfish ends, until the heart is deceived and the judgment is overcome—*who can predict the repentance of such a one?*

Such construct characters or wills so out of harmony with God and righteousness as to be fit only for destruction.

(Heb. 6:4-6.) How can such "escape the condemnation of Gehenna?" for God will not permit any one to live whose will is confirmed in unrighteousness. How responsible then is the position of those who are building character in themselves and in others! Remember that our characters are manifested by our habits of life; and each act, even the smallest, tends to form some new habit, or to confirm one already established. *How important, then, that our thoughts and actions should not be aimless, but with a purpose* (1 Cor. 10:31); and, above all, that our lives should be "transformed (re-formed) by the renewing of our minds"; that, putting aside the evil, and all influences which tend toward evil, we should receive of the Lord, through his Word, the "spirit of a sound mind," the "mind of Christ." In this view of the case, it is indeed a solemn thing to live, a solemn thing to think, and to act; and it behooves us to guard well our words, our thoughts and our actions, and to ever bear in mind our responsibility to God, both for ourselves and for others as ambassadors for Christ.

"And who is sufficient for these things?" Surely none of us in our own strength. We need first of all to give ourselves to the Lord without reserve, and then daily to drink in more and more of his spirit by communion with him through his Word and in prayer; and constantly to watch and pray lest we enter into temptation.

Let all the consecrated endeavor more and more to realize their responsibility, both in the matter of their own character-building and also in that of building up others in the most holy faith and in the character which is the legitimate result of that faith. The issues of eternal life and eternal death are before us, and before those to whom we present this gospel; and therefore it behooves us carefully and prayerfully to present the pure truth of God in all sincerity and in the spirit of Christ before God, ever bearing in mind that it is a savor either of life unto life or of death unto death.

"Give strength, blest Savior, in thy might;
Illuminate our hearts, and we,
Transformed into thine image bright,
Shall teach, and love, and live, like thee."

—Z. '93-297-298.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN

"Whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not, but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that Wicked One toucheth him not."—**1 John 5:18.**

When attempting to explain spiritual things, there is always a difficulty, particularly because we have only human words with which to express ourselves. Therefore, in order to make spiritual things clear, the Scriptures give us various similies and other figures of speech. In this text the Apostle John speaks of those who are begotten of God, those who have experienced a change of nature, who were first begotten according to the flesh, as children of Adam, and who have been begotten again—begotten of God. (1 Pet. 1:3.) Since our Lord's resurrection, God has been inviting some to come out from the world and become New Creatures—no longer human beings, but spirit beings.

The first step toward this change of nature is the receiving of a new will. But we can see that it is a mistake to call the new will alone the New Creature; for the new will comes to us before we receive the Holy Spirit. It is the new will that presents our sacrifice. If we did not have the new will, we would not present our bodies a living sacrifice. The next step is that of the Redeemer's becoming a Surety for this sacrifice and for the attainment of the new nature. The third step is the Heavenly Father's acceptance of this sacrifice, of this slaying of the earthly nature by the Redeemer, and His giving of a special sign of His acceptance. That special sign of acceptance is the begetting of the Holy Spirit.

It is very necessary that we keep the new human will separate and distinct from that which we receive at the begetting of the Spirit. We had the new will first; we desired and purposed to do God's will. Then we approached the Father in the way He had arranged—through our Redeemer. It is the new will that makes the sacrifice. The offering being presented, the merit of Jesus is applied, and thus the sacrifice becomes at once acceptable to the Father. Up to this point the will of the individual is still a human will, a *new* human will. The offering is then slain by the High Priest, our Lord Jesus, the acceptance of the Father being marked immediately by the begetting of the Spirit.

Just what God does at this juncture we do not fully understand. We do not understand clearly what a natural begetting is, though we have better means of understanding the natural begetting than of understanding the spiritual begetting. As to the spiritual begetting, we have the Divine expression that it is the starting of a new life. The one receiving it gains a supernatural illumination. Thereafter he is a changed person, a new person, a New Creature. He is now *in Christ Jesus.* He has new hopes, aims and objects, and is more and more enabled to apprehend spiritual things as the quickening influences of the Holy Spirit operate upon his mind.

But all this is something that cannot be explained to those who have not taken the necessary steps by which spiritual things may be understood. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2:9-15.) Not until we have received this Heavenly illumination can we discern spiritual things. Nor do we at first discern them in the way of appreciating them fully. Spiritual discernment grows from a small beginning. "Old things have passed away and all things have become new." These old things pass away, not instantly, but gradually; and the starting point is marked by this expression, "begotten of God."

NEW CREATURE DOES NOT PRACTICE SIN

To be begotten of God, then, is to receive the beginning of a new life, a new nature. The Apostle John declares of such, "Whosoever is begotten of God doth not commit sin (doth not practice sin—Diaglott)." (1 John 3:9.) So long as these are under such holy control, inspired by the great and precious promises, and possessing the holy will, they could not sin wilfully—could not practise sin in their lives.

WE ARE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN A *WILFUL* SIN AND BEING OVERTAKEN BY A FAULT. The reference in our text is to wilful sin, the practice of sin. The New Creature cannot sin because it is the Heavenly seed, the seed of the new nature. Every flower, every animal, sprang from a seed of life. However infinitesimal the seed may be, however embryotic, *life* is there. Likewise with the Christian; so long as any of the holy mind of God is present, there is life. *But if he sins wilfully, this holy seed is dead. If this seed perish, the individual is dead as a New Creature. Nothing would then await the individual but the Second Death;* for he had been lifted out of the first, or Adamic death, and to die again would mean that he had come under the extreme penalty of God's Law a second time. This would be an individual sentence, and would be eternal. Such would be "twice dead," as the Apostle Jude puts it—"plucked up by the roots."—Jude 12.

So we see the Apostle John's meaning—whoever is in the spirit-begotten condition, whoever has this embryo of the new nature, could not sin wilfully, could not take pleasure in sin, could not give himself over to sin. To do so would signify that he had lost this Holy Spirit, and that he had become unholy again. As St. Peter explains, it would be like the sow that was washed returning to her wallowing in the mire. The Apostle John says that one begotten of the Holy Spirit will "keep himself, and that Wicked One toucheth him not." He not only will not sin wilfully, but he will keep constantly on guard, watching himself, just as a watchman guards the castle or the city or the house. He watches all the doors, all the avenues of access.

THE NECESSITY FOR VIGILANCE

This thought of setting a watch over ourselves, of keeping ourselves so that the Wicked One cannot touch or injure us, suggests another thought: The Lord Himself is the great Centre of righteousness, purity, truth. All who are on the side of righteousness, purity, truth, will shun sin, will have no fellowship with it; for even if we should not really enter into sin in act, *if we have any SYMPATHY with it, we would be to that extent out of harmony with the Lord.* As in a circle the nearer to the center the greater the safety; so it is with the circle of righteousness, whose Center is Jehovah Himself.

The slightest sympathy with sin would cause the child of God to depart to that extent from the Center of purity. As he widened the distance between himself and the Lord, he would draw nearer to the outer rim of the circle. Think of an island surrounded by water infested with crocodiles. The person who would remain in the center of the island would be perfectly safe from these enemies. But the nearer one approached to the coast line, the greater his danger. So Satan is represented as a wily foe; and to the extent that any of us would not watch himself, he would be getting nearer to the circumference of that circle. ***Any SYMPATHY with what is not in the fullest harmony with the mind of the Lord, any participation in sin, would carry him closer and closer to the place of danger.*** The intimation of the Scriptures is that such a one would be in great danger of being touched, caught, by the great Adversary and his demon host, to his injury, perhaps to his ruin.

Presumably every Christian has had something of this experience of drawing near to the place of danger. In proportion as we live near to the Lord, we are under Divine protection. In proportion as we waver in our loyalty, we come nearer to the Adversary. One might thus endanger himself without actually sinning. His heart might still be true to the Lord, YET HE MIGHT BE TOUCHED BY SIN BY BEING INVOLVED WITH OTHERS IN SOME WAY. Therefore the word of God warns us to watch our actions, to watch OUR COMPANIONSHIP, our conduct, to abide "in the secret place of the Most High," to "make straight paths for our feet," lest that which is weak and lame be turned out of the way. Rather, let it be healed, by keeping very close to our God, as far away as possible from the point of danger.—Z. '15-237-238.

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Let us remember that the final test of character is love for God and the brethren, yea, and for our enemies—not in word merely, but in deed and in Truth—out of a pure heart. If, as we have endeavored to set forth, we are now going deeper and deeper into the testing time, "The hour of temptation that shall try all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth," and if we see many falling from their STEADFASTNESS, let us not rail at them, nor even feel unkindly, but contrariwise, let us think ourselves and take heed to our own steps, that they shall be in the footprints of Jesus. Let us remember that the Adsersary is trying some in one direction and others in another. Let us remember that we ourselves must be tested by the "fire that shall try every man's work of what sort it is."—I Cor. 3:13.

The faithful, who are to receive the Kingdom and be joint-heirs with Christ in His great Messianic Reign now about to be inaugurated, *alone will STAND.*—Z. '15-344.

"Press on, beloved, in the race,
The goal is very near.
Faint not, thou soon shalt see His face—
Then, be thou of good cheer!" —Z, '15-264

It is reasonable to expect that the time will yet come when all who are faithful to the Lord will be treated in like manner as was our Lord. Indeed, it is already coming. It behooves us individually to put on the whole armor of light, that we may be able to withstand whatever persecution comes upon us from the blinded followers of the Adversary. It does not necessarily follow that the instruments of Satan are murderers and thugs. When we look back at our Lord's First Advent, we see that those who were most successfully used of the Adversary against our Lord Jesus were the chief religionists, the Scribes, the Pharisees, the Doctors of the Jewish Law—professedly men of God *and leaders of His people.* But "His servants ye are to whom ye render service," said the Lord. Those, therefore, who rendered service in the way of persecuting the Master, and finally in crucifying Him, were the servants of Satan, no matter whose servants they thought they were.—Z. '15-201.

Humility is the essential of all who would be of the Lord's family.—Z. '15-174.

The real saints of God have never been left without all needed supplies in every age. In our own day more Truth has unfolded than at any previous period of the Church's history.—Z. '15-151.

Children of God are never anarchists, lawless; and their opposition to human arrangements must only be because moved thereto by higher, divine laws and arrangements.—Z. '97-42.

OH, HOW FEW of the consecrated have so great a love for purity, so great a desire to keep the garment unspotted from the world, that they are careful to have every wrinkle quickly removed, and thereafter to guard the robe more zealously than ever. Yet, these and these alone, walk with the Lord in white and are overcomers, who in due time shall *be glorified with Him and sit with Him in His throne*—and it is their names that shall not be blotted out of the Lamb's book of life.—Z. '97-160.

Satan achieves no greater triumph than when he seduces a soul which was once enlightened and sanctified by the truth; AND THE INFLUENCE OF SUCH A ONE FOR EVIL IS MORE THAN DOUBLED. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."—Z. '92-180.

Truly the benighted Galileans were blessed in the great light which shone in their midst. But it tested them as Truth, Light, always does. The few children of the light were manifested and separated from the children of the darkness, the children of disobedience. And similarly we of today, living in the great light now shining as an arc-light upon the Word of God, have increased responsibilities and are taking our stand either as children of Light and its advocates, or as children of darkness in opposing it.—Z. '10-55.

Let us all have in mind that "the end of all things is at hand; be of sober mind and watch unto prayer." How glad should be our hearts that we have come to the end of this great dark night and that soon the light of the Lord shall fill the earth! Having in mind our great desire to see our King, let us also remember the admonition of the Apostle, "above all things have fervent love among yourselves." Having this love, we will cover each other's defects; and nothing enables us so much to have this love as looking with expectant joy to seeing the Lord and our beloved brethren who have gone before.—Z. '18-69.

All who would follow in the footsteps of Jesus must also reject every compromise with the world—"Ye are not of the world even as I am not of the world, therefore the world hateth you."—John 17:16.—Z. '06-44.

The gathering of the elect class for the Kingdom is under disadvantageous conditions which will thoroughly test them, and make their way so narrow that FEW will find it, and STILL FEWER make progress in it.—Z. '03, 175.

Let us not forget that there were conditions precedent to our admission into this *light,* and that those conditions *must be maintained* if we would stay in the light. If, therefore, all or any portion of the light becomes darkened, our first query should be, "Am I living up to my covenant conditions—self-denial, self-sacrifice?" If we discover a coolness there we may know that we have found the real secret of our trouble and should at once "take it to the Lord in prayer."—Z. '13-375.

We see the necessity of ever keeping the instructions and precepts of the Lord fresh in our minds, and of drinking deep into its inspiring spirit, although we are already established in the faith. To be established in the faith is one thing, but to be established in Christian character and in all the graces of the spirit is quite another.—Z. '93:296.

Let us constantly keep before our eyes the model which the Lord Jesus set for our example—*that model of the complete fulfilment of the will of God,* in which the whole Law was kept blamelessly. Let us follow His steps of righteousness and self-sacrifice as nearly as a full measure of loving zeal and faithfulness and loyalty to God will enable us to do, and we shall have a blessed sense of the Divine approval now, and the glorious reward of Divine favor in due time.—Z. '11, 180.

It is not because the "little flock" of "overcomers" *suffer more* than the great company of tribulation saints that they are to get the prize, but simply because they suffer *gladly, willingly, self-sacrificingly.* The tribulation saints doubtless suffer as much as the "overcomers" or more; and the "overcomers" have so much pleasure, in the divine favour, in connection with their sufferings in this present time, that it makes their *willing* services and sacrifices seem but light afflictions which are thus working out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.—Z. '94:213.

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Such need to see that participation in a few battles is not the condition of our call and enlistment, and that the rewards—glory, honour and immortality—which the Lord has promised to the faithful cannot be expected by those who do not fight the good fight faithfully and continuously. We are not here discussing what portion will come to those who are careless in respect to the terms of their enlistment. We are not saying whether their portion will be in the "great company" or elsewhere; but we are seeking to make clear that none can be counted worthy of a place in the little flock, in the glory of the Kingdom, unless he shall have the proper appreciation of his enlistment, and have been, at heart at least, thoroughly loyal to and active in the defence of the principles for which his covenant stands committed—the principles of righteousness at any cost, even unto death.—Z. '03: 421.

The prize of our High Calling will not be given to anyone on the basis of mercy or of favor. God shows mercy in connection with the weaknesses and blemishes against which we are striving; but He will not permit even one individual to enter the Kingdom class whose character is not suitable for that high position. Those whom He approves for joint-heirship with our Lord Jesus must represent the principles of righteousness *and must know how to apply these principles NOW.* Whoever is not disposed to justice to such an extent as to be willing to suffer loss rather than to be unjust will not have a share in the Messianic Kingdom.—Z. '17-309.

INTERESTING LETTERS

Standfast Bible Students,
Portland, Ore.

Dear Brethren:

We shall endeavour to express our gratitude and joy for the services rendered us by Brother ———, August ———, at ———, but really seem lost for words of expression. Such messages could not possibly be from any other source than the Divine; and truly we groan within ourselves for the time when we can appreciate the great love of our God and Lord Jesus perfectly, and it may not be very long now until we will be granted this very privilege.

These dear comforters are surely pouring upon the feet of Jesus the sweet and expensive ointment. Please accept ——— enclosed herewith, that another drop may comfort and strengthen another heart through the Corn Gems or Comforters.

May the Lord add His richest blessing to you all, pray for us. By His grace we remain, yours in the one hope,

Missouri.

Dear Brethren: Thanks for your dear letter of August—how I appreciate your letters and the sweet fellowship. I love you all, especially dear Brother Y, and all the dear pilgrim comforters, and I hope that you all may be found faithful, and none of you may depart from the pure message as given us by that wise and faithful servant, Brother Russell.

May the dear Lord ever be with you and guide you, and that you all may show forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Again with love to all I remain,
Your Brother in the Anointed,

S. R. Mc., Texas.

LORD, CHOOSE MY CROSS FOR ME

"It was a time of sadness, and my heart,
Although it knew and loved the better part,
Felt weary with the conflict and the strife,
And all the needful discipline of life.

"And while I thought on these—as given to me.
My trial test of faith and love to be—
It seemed as if I never could be sure
That, faithful to the end, I should endure.

"And thus, no longer trusting to his might
Who says, 'We walk by faith and not by sight'—
Doubting, and almost yielding to despair,
The thought arose: My cross I cannot bear.

"Far heavier its weight must surely be,
Than those of others which I daily see:
Oh, if I might another burden choose,
Methinks, I should not fear my crown to lose.

"A solemn silence reigned on all around,
E'en Nature's voices uttered not a sound;
The evening shadows seemed of peace to tell,
And peace upon my weary spirit fell.

"A moment's pause, and then a heavenly light
Beamed full upon my wondering, raptured sight;
Angels on silvery wings seemed everywhere,
And angels' music thrilled the balmy air.

"Then one more fair than all the rest to see—
One to whom all others bowed the knee—
Came gently to me, as I trembling lay,
And 'Follow me,' He said—'I am the Way.'

"Then speaking thus, He led me far above;
And there, beneath a canopy of love,
Crosses of diverse size and shape were seen,
Larger and smaller than mine own had been.

"And one there was more beauteous to behold,
A little one, with jewels set in gold;
Ah, this, methought, I can with comfort wear,
For it will be an easy one to bear.

"And so the little cross I quickly took,
But all at once my frame beneath it shook;
The sparkling jewels—fair were they to see,
But far too heavy was their weight for me.

"'This may not be' I cried, and looked again,
To see if there were any here could ease my pain,
But one by one I passed them slowly by,
Till on a lovely one I cast my eye.

"Fair flowers 'round its sculptured form entwined,
And grace and beauty semed in it combined;
Wondering, I gazed, and still I wondered more,
To think so many should have passed it o'er.

"But oh! that form so beautiful to see,
Soon made its hidden sorrows known to me;
Thorns lay beneath those flowers and colors fair,
Sorrowing, I said, 'this cross I may not bear!'

"And so it was, with each and all around,
Not one to suit my need could there be found.
Weeping, I laid each heavy burden down,
As my guide gently said, 'No cross—no crown.'

"At length to him I raised my saddened heart,
He knew its sorrow, bade its doubts depart.
'Be not afraid,' he said, 'But trust in me,
My perfect love shall now be shown to thee.'

"And then with lightened eyes and willing feet,
Again I turned my earthly cross to meet;
With forward footsteps, turning not aside,
For fear some hidden evil might betide.

"And then, in the prepared, appointed way,
Listening to hear and ready to obey,
A cross I found of plainest form,
With only words of love inscribed thereon.

"With thankfulness I raised it from the rest,
And joyfully acknowledged it the best;
The only one of all the many there,
That I could feel was good for me to bear.

"And while I thus my chosen one confessed,
I saw a heavenly brightness on it rest,
And as I bent, my burden to sustain,
I recognized my own old cross again.

"But O, how different did it seem to be,
Now I had learned its preciousness to see,
Yes, now no longer will I say,
'Perhaps another is a better way.'

"Ah! henceforth my one desire shall be,
That he who knows me best shall choose for me,
And so whate'er His love seems good to send,
I'll trust it's best—because he knows the end."

—*Unknown.*

Z. '05-235.

Any one begotten of the Holy Spirit at one moment could not the next moment die the Second Death. There is too much of a difference between spirit-begetting and the condition of wilful sin for us to imagine that they could follow closely the one upon the other. They are opposites. It would be impossible to pass from the one condition to the other instantly. So this class prospers for a time, but as the trials, difficulties and persecutions incident to the Christian life come in they gradually fall away. There is a failure to live up to the standard. There is a tendency to take a medium course—neither to *live close* to the Lord and His requirements nor to *drift away from Him*.—Z. '13-202.

We have nearly reached the mountain-top, and every day multiplies the evidences that the journey is nearing its end. Just how long it will be we cannot know; probably it is best that we do not know. But we believe that it will not be very long.—Z. '16, 70.

Humility is one of the basic principles of a properly crystalized character.—Z. '16-36.